

CINEMA

AUGUST 1992 VOL. 15

Papers \$5

FULL REPORT

CANNES '92

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AUSTRALIAN FILMS AT CANNES
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TEEN MOVIES DEBATE

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The Boulevard Group From Down Under To All Over.

Newsreel

JOHN GASCOIGNE

"Newsreels will never be a household name the old jabs. But in Australia's cinema, the "good snippets" have begun full regimens. For reasons partly as they need to be (Events both monstrous and small mostly in the pre-television age (before 1955) are something as trivial as feature films in Greater Union cinemas in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra. And the such events in laying up monstrous moments of the 20th century — such as troops are battling in the world wars, the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Douglas Broome's telling the Pines for a brother involved.

It is still the result of a \$4-million project named Operation Newsreel. It could as well have been named "Bringing Out of New Again", after Peter Allen's song. The restoration project has been sponsored by Greater Union and Roper Murdoch News Corporation.

Thousands of feature reels and shorts film were repaired, copied and given extra security in backrooms of the National Film and Sound Archives located in Canberra. The original negatives of copies of 4,000 newsreels, some from the 1930s and 1940s, were being examined, re-copied and taped back together by four film technicians before being copied on to acetate film stock and videotape.

While film, which gave way to the more durable acetate in 1935, breaks down to a powder unless stored in nitrogen, it is perfect. They were rarely seen, as much of Australia's early national footage has been lost forever. Project manager Andrew News says:

Before the project was launched, many of the newsreel soundtracks were actually from empty. We lost them seriously. It was regarded as a misadventure. Yet these newsreels have much of our national heritage. We're very proud of it. About 4,000 newsreels have survived. From 1911 to 1930, few newsreels were made per week (less than 100). The output dropped to about 60 newsreels a year. Now they're being re-released — in some cases more than 60 years after their first screening.

Operation Newsreel was launched in Sydney and Melbourne with Greater Union screenings of week 11 1938 showing scenes of Australian life in Sydney filmed last: the "Poles and caps" of a woman racing (Norman Hartnell) the Queen's designer, introducing his latest before the local leaders and the feeling in New South Wales when 27 years after the mining crash "Southern Cloud".

"The newsreels have gone over beautifully in Sydney and Melbourne," says News. "There is obviously a strong interest in nostalgia for older audiences but younger ones, too, are intrigued by what abouted their parents and grandparents."



The newsreels began their daily screenings in Sydney and Melbourne last September. In March, News said the Canberra cinema of the Greater Union Organisation to the claim of more features, taking the newsreels. And on Friday the film of the black and white scenes began playing to nostalgic-receptive audiences in Perth, Adelaide and Brisbane.

An act of apprehension accompanied the expected release of the newsreels in the two main cities. There were, perhaps, less risk in Canberra Melbourne. But, conformity with an international mobility for clattering silent classics, Sydney's Pitt Centre, with its three cinema, speed in April for a second re-release copy to be made available for daily screening.

"Our Sydney audience, particularly the younger element, have been greatly enthralled about the newsreels," says Greater Union's national buyer and programming manager John Pollard. Specific subjects of stamping getting as eloquent as "Tom and Jerry" clips. Newsreels of the 1930s featured opening films "Square power" and "A nightingale", adds Pollard.

News says:

We are showing them in no particular order. They were planned with 1931 Greater Union featuring Australia Day footage. Melbourn's National Theatre, won by 40 Year Melbourne welcoming a new train engine named Henry Henry and an incredible film clip of a motorcade in Florida showing newspaper and thought working at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. The ceremony is by Charles Lawrence, one of Greater Union's best filming and world war photographers, and end to the great old actor, Jimmy, who for 25 years old commentary on the last Melbourne newsreel.

When I went to the movies, the things we saw Greater Union's opening titles. The 100 personal items whose titles and copy.

Newsreels were kept worked was probably less so at the time — 1938 — when the black and white scene was rising "radio news with pictures".

One of Australia's first newsreels was the Sydney produced Australian Gazette, which ran from 1915 to the mid-1920s. It was a weekly, sub-titled news-of-the-day feature of about 15 minutes. Much of this footage is still held by the Australian Film Institute's producers and the film producer Ken Hall's Cinema and Production Hall's company was owned by Union. That later later to become the Greater Union Organisation.

In 1931, Stuart Doyle, managing director of Union Theatre, placed Hall while to use on location for Cinema's first feature. On the location was said: "How about we make our own newsreels?"

Back in Sydney, Hall directed the first Greater Union feature. It featured a growing relationship in response to Australian Movietone News, a product of the U.S. company Fox Movietone, which had launched its newsreels two years earlier. It was the first time, among 20th Century-Fox, and Movietone, that the first feature in 1938. News Corp. owned 2,000 newsreels to Operation Newsreel.

Producing weekly feature, each of five to seven items, for 30 years, the two national houses competed to be known around with the news of the day. Their better royal — especially the 1930 feature film, *Newsreel* — lasted until 1930 when the great photo newspaper in a half-hour time against the new challenge, nightly television news. It was a glory was, the audience said.

Each newsreel took a week of shooting and editing on the new Greater Union Productions, which showed out the newsreels on their own-organised news in the first years before it faded.

New Australian News feature film and was in connection of the better newsreels to the 1930s newsreels. "The first of the feature film in the picture, not just the week for newsreels and the first."



THE 1992 AFI AWARD NOMINATIONS

BEST FEATURE FILM

Black Robe (Robert Lantos, Eve Mitelman, Stephenie Robinson)

Romper Stomper (Jan Pringle, Daniel Schacht)

Strictly Ballroom (Tiborien Mull)

The Last Days of Chester Row (Jan Graepman)

DIRECTOR FILMS AWARD

FOR BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN DIRECTING

Bruce Barlow (Black Robe)

Geoffrey Wright (Romper Stomper)

Sam Latham (Strictly Ballroom)

Gillian Armstrong (The Last Days of Chester Row)

CASTING AWARDS

BEST CAST

Black Robe (Bruce Barlow)

David Cameron (Breakthrough)

Sam Latham (Craig Pearce (Strictly Ballroom)

John Curran (The Last Days of Chester Row)

BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE

Minnie Driver (Daydream Believer)

Christa Karman (Breakthrough)

Thera Mott (Strictly Ballroom)

Lisa Harrow (The Last Days of Chester Row)

BEST GUEST ACTRESS FOR BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE

Louise in Blue (Black Robe)

Russell Crowe (Romper Stomper)

Paul M. Smith (Strictly Ballroom)

Bruce Gird (The Last Days of Chester Row)

BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE

Willa O. Harper (Black Robe)

Gin Caruso (Strictly Ballroom)

Pat Thomson (Strictly Ballroom)

Minnie Driver (The Last Days of Chester Row)

FILM EDITOR AWARDS

FOR BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE

August Schallenberg (Black Robe)

Daniel Polonsky (Romper Stomper)

Bruce Gird (Strictly Ballroom)

Bill Hunter (The Last Days of Chester Row)

SCREENPLAY AWARDS

FOR BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN SCREENPLAY

Patricia James (Black Robe)

James Davis (Breakthrough Over the Arch)

Steve Mason (Strictly Ballroom)

Geoffrey Simpson (The Last Days of Chester Row)

SOUND FILM AWARDS

FOR BEST EDITING

The Maltman (Black Robe)

Bill Murphy (Romper Stomper)

John Curran (Strictly Ballroom)

Nicholas Desmaris (The Last Days of Chester Row)

BEST ORIGINAL MUSIC SCORE

Geoffrey Simpson (Black Robe)

Felicia Pace (Breakthrough)

John Clifford White (Romper Stomper)

Paul Zimowsky (The Last Days of Chester Row)

FILM SETS AWARDS

FOR BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN PRODUCTION DESIGN

David McFarley (Love in Limbo)

Stewart James Evans (Romper Stomper)

Catherine Martin (Strictly Ballroom)

Joel Patterson (The Last Days of Chester Row)

BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN COSTUME DESIGN

Thomas April, John May (Black Robe)

Quinn Peterson (Love in Limbo)

Anna Bonham (Romper Stomper)

Angus Beattie (Strictly Ballroom)

BEST EDITOR AWARDS

FOR BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN EDITING

Phil Judd, Peter Robinson, Gary Wilkins (Black Robe)

Phil Judd, Gertie Ben, Kevin Whittington (Love in Limbo)

Steve Jennings, David Lee, Frank Upson (Romper Stomper)

Bruce Brown, Sam Green, Roger Savage (Strictly Ballroom)

YOUNG ACTRESS AWARDS

FOR BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN A FEATURE FILM

Alexandra Colville (Breakthrough Over the Arch)

"On recommendation by the Actors' Jury to the AFI Board of Directors"

KODAK NON-FEATURE FILM NOMINATIONS

BEST DOCUMENTARY

Black Harvest (Robin Anderson, Ben Connolly)

Cliff's Dilemma (Clifford from an Australian Current

Cinema Motion)

Mr. Hill is Entitled to be an Agent (Gary Dellow)

The Squealer and the Grass (Chris Wilson)

BEST SHORT FICTION

Secrets of the City (Kathy Linsley)

Shall We (Doreen Moran)

The Angeline (John Kass, Anthony Lacey)

The Dancer (Annette Schuster)

BEST SHORT FILM

My Tiger's Eyes (Tracy Yee)

Sea You Next Weekend (John Twiss)

The Art of Drowning (James Grant)

The Road to Now (Gordon, Edgely)

KODAK NON-FEATURE SPECIAL

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

James Farnes, in Cinematography and in

Director (Annie Rose, Towns)

Sky Winery, in Acting (For He and She)

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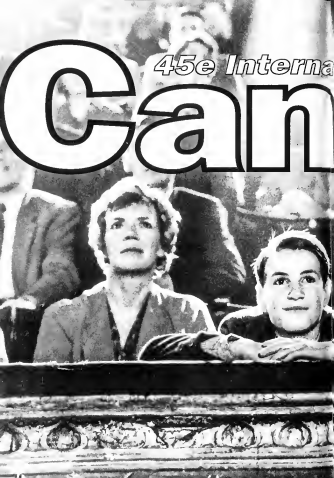


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SCOTT MURRAY



Despite the fine efforts of other festivals, Cannes remains without doubt the international film event. There is a real buzz about Cannes when May draws near; and more rumours, deals and stories emanate from it than anywhere else, let alone many of the films that will grab critical attention around the world during the next year or so.



Of course, to those interested only in American mainstream cinema, Cannes may seem a bit off-centred, some Australian newspapers, for example, labelling their title as the forefront of an indigenous neo-intellectualism (think the whole thing overseas). In fact, one doubts if any other country (with the exception of prize-winning journalists to Cannes as does Australia). The Times in London would never think about being properly presented, nor would *Le Monde* (the *Spiegel*, but *The Age*, *The Australian*, et al.) bypass the event, not even bothering to fully list those Australian films selected. (Praise, then, for the presenting efforts of SBS *The Movie Show*.)

This disinterest by the fourth estate is all the more puzzling if one properly appreciates the importance of Cannes to the Australian film industry. Many of Australia's best directors owe an enormous amount to having been discovered at Cannes (and by Pierre Rissler!), be they John Curran, Fred Schepisi or Gillian Armstrong. Cannes has been, and will be, the principal launching pad for much Australian cinema, especially in those days of lower-budget, low Australian films.

Of course, very few Australian films make it to an official selection, which is cause for real concern. One should also note the increasing importance of the link between Cannes selection and box office. This year, a newspaper did not even list but one (James Ivory for *Mousetrap* (U.S.)) had been selected on an official event. This means the chances of Australian films just going to the market and making money are lessening; the films must first be good enough for a festival spot.

One organization which is well-aware of Cannes' importance, and is doing all it can to turn the industry around in the sales marketplace, is the Australian Film Commission's marketing division. Without the AFC, many an Australian, overseas by the beak of Cannes, would never emerge from the relative seclusion of a hotel or Le Petit Carlton bar. Fortunately, the AFC has so successfully held the hands of various producers over the years that today there is a growing number of Australians who know how to work Cannes for all its worth. It is increasingly common to see Australian filmmakers lob in for a day or two and negotiate a deal. That independence and confidence in a world marketplace is essential for a continuing local industry, and it is clear that the AFC's marketing work is paying off.

As most readers now know, the Australian film which did do well at Cannes this year was Ben Lohman's *Strictly Ballroom*. Pierre Rissler had actually suggested it be programmed in a midnight

BELOW: OFFICIAL PHOTO WITH THE LARGEST CAST. JOHN HODGSON, LEFT, FROM SYDNEY, AND HIS CAST, JOHN HODGSON AND PIERRE RISSLER, TOOK THEIR RESPECTABLE AND LATTERLY PRIZED TO THE RED CARPET.



THE PRIZES

PALME D'OR

Den Gula Hjelen (The Best Intention, Bille August, Sweden)

GRAND PRIX DU JURY

James Ivory for *Mousetrap* (U.S.)

GRAND PRIX DU JURY

Il Canto di Pansini (The Stolen Children, Italy)

INTERPRETATION FEMINE

Pirella Göttsche-August for her role in *The Best Intention*

INTERPRETATION MASCULINE

Tim Roth for his role in *The Player* (U.S.)

GRAND PRIX DU JURY

El Sol del Membrillo (The Golden Tree Sun, Victor Erice, Spain)
and
Somewhere in Time (An Independent Life, Václav Kadravský, Russia)

GRAND PRIX DU JURY

Robert Altman for *The Player*

PALME D'OR DU COURT-MÉTRAGE

Caroline (Franki Stern, Germany)

GRAND PRIX DU COURT-MÉTRAGE

Le Soudan (Mamad Poutou, Belgium)

GRAND PRIX DU JURY

Mac (John Tuohy, U.S.)

TECHNIQUE

Fernando Robles for *El Pope* (The Pope, Argentina)



LEFT: MORICONI (VALERIA MORICONI) STANDS ON THE BEACHES OF ANZIO (GIUSEPPE MORICONI); ABOVE: ANZIO (GIUSEPPE MORICONI); RIGHT: ANZIO (GIUSEPPE MORICONI)

BELOW: ANZIO (GIUSEPPE MORICONI) STANDS ON THE BEACHES OF ANZIO (GIUSEPPE MORICONI)

screening of *Un Certain Regard* and news of the disbanding response soon spread. Excellent world sales was the result.

And, as with other Australian films, *Steady Beethoven* just missed out on the Camera d'Or for best first feature (on a 4-6 vote), following *David in the Field* in 1988 (which made the final four) and *Proof* last year (the first two).¹

The success of *Steady Beethoven*, plus market-oriented Geoffrey Wright's *Rampage Scapes*, did much to disguise the fact that 1989 was not a good year for Australian films. Next year, though, looks better. Australia should have Jane Campion's *The Piano* (Lions in Competition), and hopefully Tracy Moffatt's and Laurie McLaren's first features in some event. Let us hope that what looks like the same one in Australian cinema gets the best of on-the-spot media coverage, a disaster and a waste. After all, how can one attract Australian back into cinema to see local films if the fourth crime trials us (and the world's) best producers with such disinterest?

THE COMPETITION

As usual, the prizes at Cannes created controversy, this year because they were said to favour old-fashioned, academic filmmakers instead of the young and innovative. This critic, for once in accord with the press going (have those to *The Player*), would argue awards ought to go to the best made films, irrespective of the sort of cinema they might be perceived to represent. And there can be little doubt, surely, that Bill August's *The Red Interiors* (Palace d'Or), Gianni Amelio's *The Stolen Children* (Grand Jury Prize) and Victor Erice's *The Queen Two Sons* (Jury Prize) were the best-made films in Competition, followed by James Ivory's *Howards End* (High Anniversary Prize). Whether these films represent our cinema as type of cinema isn't the point.

First, then, *The Stolen Children*, which is Gianni Amelio's fourth feature, and comes after the acclaimed *Papa Ajaccio* (Opa Dora). Not that it had any need to do so, *The Stolen Children* confirms Amelio's place as one of the most talented and creative directors working today.

When the police arrest a woman for prostituting her 11-year-old daughter, Rosetta (Valentina Scodice) and her younger brother, Luciano (Giuseppe Ippolito), are sent by the court to a charitable orphanage outside Rome. But when taken care by a young

and rather ample-bodied woman, Antonia (Rosetta Lo Verso), they are turned away because of the girl's 'past'. Antonia is just forced to take them to another state home, in Sicily. So begins the long journey south, a journey that for all Italians has enormous social and political implications.

On the way, Antonia is drawn increasingly towards the children. Not only do they inspire a kindly protectiveness, they also liberate the child in her. Quite clearly, Amelio feels that the way society has distanced adults from children and their own has been detrimental for all, a fear of molestation having put up all sorts of physical and emotional barriers.

The children are much more willing to open up emotionally, especially Rosetta, who has a very protective attitude to her brother. Always having been forced to sit outside her mother's flat while Rosetta is with a client, Luciano has no knowledge of his sister's torment. She manages to keep it that way, until Luciano happens to glance at a magazine and read for himself what has happened. The nature of his discovery, but more important the way Rosetta is able to suppress her own hurt to help look after someone she so cares for, make for some overpowering scenes.

But, too, there are moments of light, as when Antonia and the children take delight in changing 'time-off' by loitering on beaches, visiting Antonia's family restaurant in Calabria and walking unconcernedly the streets of Italy. Even an accidental meeting with two young French tourists gives rise to slight, though, even here, the cruelty of the State manages to intervene.

The ending, which is best not revealed here, is profoundly moving. Certainly, there was no finer film at Cannes this year. In Amelio, the cinema has a new master.

As for Victor Erice, he too is one of the cinema's greatest directors, but he has made only two features, *El Espíritu de la Llama* (*The Spirit of the Beehive*, 1973) and *El Sur* (1983). So it was an unexpected delight to find at Cannes a 100-minute documentary by him about the Spanish painter, Antonio López.

The *Quinto Sur* film begins with López's meticulous assembly of a canvas and ends with his living, at least temporarily (for he



¹ David Stratton is published in *The Australian*, but his six freedoms who goes primarily to Cannes for *Verity* and *The Man Who*.

² In the newspaper of that date, it should be noted that the head of the ANFS marketing branch is Sir Murray, that writer's London-based sister.

³ There is at least one known case. Up until last year, women appeared unaccompanied. (The placing of *David in the Field* was revealed by one of the Camera d'Or jury last year.) Whether other Australian films have come close to the subject of great speculation.



WITH JAVIER CÁMERA (JACK) AND CECILIA SUÁREZ (ANNA BERGMAN) (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) JAMES FROVY (JACQUES AUGUST), AGUSTÍN FERRER (ANNE'S FATHER), AND MAX VON SYDOW (AN ANNA'S FATHER) IN *THE BEST INVENTION*. (FROM TOP RIGHT) JAVIER CÁMERA AND CECILIA SUÁREZ (JACK AND ANNA BERGMAN) AS THEY MEET IN THE FILM'S FIRST SCENE

is a perfectionist), finished the painting and subsequent period drawing (perhaps the real "real" product).

Rather like parts of Jacques Rivette's *La Belle Noiseuse*, Erick's film is a precise and intense look at an artist at work. Many of the revelations are strongly evoking: the careful way Léopoldenstein himself so as to look at the queen tree while painting, marking with metal crosses where the toes of the shoes must always go, the white lines he paints on the floor and leaves so that he can check against two plants how the two a slither shape over the months he takes to complete the painting and sketch, the hot period lines being done in winter mornings around him.

The film has Erick's typically measured pace, but anything quicker would break the tension between the viewer and an artist painstakingly at work. As Erick says of his experiments in recording Léopold's work:

One can observe that the artist's work appears on a kind of tension, where feelings of obsession and suspicion become key-elements in a representation. Surpassing the results, one can see how the painter's eye and hand have managed to restrain the limits of representation, to show us finally not a direct testimony of reality but to past revelation.

The film is packed with detail and insight into Léopold's relationship with art and life. One scene in particular, where a third voice and a discussion on art comes, is as humorous and endearing as anything Cannes could offer elsewhere. Occasionally, too, is some clear not work fully or a too long, and those segments shot on Beta videotape (the usual tone) (especially since Javier Aguilar's work) and Angel Luis Ferrández's film color photography is as humorous).

But why couldn't when so much cinematic talent is on show? If only there could be found someone who can combine "mystery" and "fiction" into a film more often than once. The present cinema scene is too threatened to be able to afford his controlled obsession from it.

In the quiet glow, what actually topped both Amador's and Erick's films was *Best Invention*. The Best Invention, a superbly crafted film that left many critics emotionally cold but had quite the reverse effect on this one.

Made concurrently with the no-horror television series that was a ratings triumph in Scandinavia, August's 118-minute film is based on Jacques Bergman's final screenplay. Developing ideas only fragmentarily dealt with in his autobiography, *La casa Magna* (Magna House), Bergman takes an unflinching look at ten years in the life of his parents, from when they meet to his birth.

There is a careful and controlled look, not only at those the vast difference of class between the Bergmans and the Bergmans, but Henrik Bergman (Søren Følmer) is a deeply tortured man, the ways of the flesh and weakness of spirit struggling against a Calvinist nature of bourgeois intent. In contrast, Anna Bergman (Perilla Obergren-August) is a young woman of delicacy and calm, with a delightfully mischievous humor. As well, she has great strength and independence, and a will so determined that nothing (family, self doubt, the harshness of life as a wife in remote areas) can stop her.

Some may find the negative aspects of character, particularly Henrik's, too powerfully drawn (especially those who prefer American love stories where everyone is perfectly nice), but there is a truth in *The Best Invention* that is hard and clear.

The film is academic, precise, controlled and refined, but always tinged with sensitivity and feeling. Certainly it is brilliantly acted, by Perilla Obergren-August, Søren Følmer and Max von Sydow (as Anna's father) — to unfairly select a few. Obergren-August, for one, is a real lion in the subtle way the conspiracy nature of Anna's fearful love for the troubled Henrik.

One should also note the brilliant photography of Jürgen Prosser and the much praised work of production designer Anna Asp. Certainly, this is more than the filmmaking of the old school, but since the newer directors could produce nothing new (at least), the Festival jury was absolutely correct (no wonder).

The film most compared to *The Best Invention* was James Ivory's *Mosses End*, which was an early Palme d'Or favorite (but had to settle for the specially created fifth Anniversary Prize). In fact, one of the more metaphoric signs at Cannes was the celebratory dinner of the Ivory-Merchandise group at La Mer. Even after the closing ceremony. Viewed from the adjacent table, one could see clearly the contrast between the impeccably posed Henri Merchandise and the close Ivory, who would not have spoken ten words during the meal, eyes staring unconcernedly at his food. Maybe he was reflecting on how that elusive Palme d'Or may have slipped away from him for ever.

If that is so, it would be a pity, for Merchandise and Ivory have had an extraordinary career in making a successful niche on the edges of mainstream cinema. Despite all the odds facing directors of highly personal and artistic work, especially work so at odds with the rubricized worldviews of much cinema today, they have kept finding finance and, along the way, made some very fine films.

The plot of *Mosses End* need not be summarized here, for most interested readers will have already seen it by now. What should be said is that it is beautifully acted, with superb photography (from Tony Finer-Roberts) and precise direction. Again, Ivory-Merchandise has correctly judged what would not and what would be in period drama.

Adapting literature a half-century or so old is a risky task, but it has now become an Ivory specialty. As usual, he confidently brings certain modern perspectives to a novel very much of and about its time. In particular, as with the more recently an *Mr. and Mrs. Budge*, he raises dramatic issues in a way no man, however subtle, could merely resist being seduced by. Ivory also offers a critique of the moral unscrupulousness of male behavior that is both incisive and constructive, and understanding of the

why male emotion is suppressed by it. When Mr Wilcox (Anthony Hopkins) breaks down and cries (over the problem of another male, naturally), it is both pathetic and moving.

This is a luscious film to look at, especially in the dark scenes where the new colour stock gives a richness and detail not dreamt of before. The beginning, with Ruth (Victoria Beckham) walking through the long grass at night, gives a sensory pleasure too rarely experienced in the compromised age of super-speed cinema.

The precision of Ivory's direction, too, from his composing of figures in varying landscapes to the delicacy of performance from the entire cast, gives great pleasure. The only flaw in this pastoral perfection comes from the typically over-the-top production design of Laurence Arrighi.

Not that there aren't other, more major, flaws undermining the surface perfection. The character of Helen Schlegel (Hilma Seehausen Carter), for example, is given equal screen time early on, but is allowed neither to emerge fully nor the very point she becomes most vivid at (and interesting). There is also far too little analysis (in a 142 minute film) of how and why she and her sister, Margaret (Rima Thompson), take divergent paths.

Particularly puzzling is why Margaret chooses to marry Mr Wilcox, a most uninteresting and conservative man, especially when she is established as so lively and intelligent a woman. This being an Ivory film, one (for alone love) is not invited to a possible cause for matrimony. Rather, Ivory seems to conceive of male-female relationships as platonic friendships (or secondary sexual contracts). When in this film he most grapple with heterosexual sex—the bed scene between Leonard Burt (Sam West) and his wife (Nicola Duffell)—Ivory makes a woman's healthy sexuality look distasteful. Like too many an Ivory movie, Leonard heads towards sex with a woman rather reluctantly, if not apathetically. Ivory really ought to try to be a little more objective.

An even more major criticism is that the film's resolution goes against much of what one assumes Ivory with us to argue. For all the film's attempts at social criticism, it ultimately reinforces the English notion that class should not rise, as the result can be disastrous (especially for the poor). Leonard's sensitivity and

striving for aesthetic experience outside that of his working-class origins leads first to poverty and then to death, killed by the sort of bores that inspired him in the first place to hope for better things. Surely Ivory can't be serious.

Equally, the film cares too much for the pretentious of the period and too little for the lives of its down-trodden. Sure one is happy Margaret, Helen and the baby have the green-leaved Rosewood End at their disposal, but why is Leonard's widow so conspicuously ignored? Her dramatic purpose served, she is culturally tossed aside.

Also from England (and this time with a British director) come Terence Davies' *The Long Day Closes*. For those not won over by his complicated feature of *Distant Voices* and *Still Life*, his new work may prove a major surprise. The cold tone and homophobia of the previous work is gone (no more drunken men and sexual violence), and replaced by warmth toward people that reign on the sentimental. Certainly the boy's love for his mother runs both films, but without the abhorred father, and the anger directed at him, love for mother dominates.

This change of tone was greatly welcomed at Cannes, especially by several of the director's friends who have long been advocating Davies put more of his own good brains into his work. Certainly at a press conference, Davies looked as disconcerted a man totally at ease with his new film and his life.

In *The Long Day Closes*, Davies continues his story from *Still Life*, again 'recreating' an era through which he, as a boy, passed with stylized images and period songs (mercifully fewer this time).

Some critics were disappointed that Davies has jettisoned his own homosexuality (all but avoided except for a loving shot of a half-naked labourer and a painting scene where the boy watches his brother's back). When questioned about this, Davies argued that he had had no sexual feelings by the age of eleven (the boy's age).

Technically, the film is a dazzling visual triumph of technique and (again) of the new Eastman colour stock. The compositions are precise, the cinematography consistently top-draw (unlike in *Distant Voices*) and the performances precise.

What underlines partially these striking achievements, however, is Davies' preoccupation of time and memory that it doesn't really add up to all that much beyond picture-perfect nostalgia. Davies is unquestionably concerned in his own narrative patterning, but is hindered at day's end to feel his film not much still. It came as little surprise to hear from Davies that his autobiographical cinema journey is at an end.

Still, the film shows a care and love that makes one warm to it greatly.

Another major contributor of films at Cannes this year was Russia. Both Pavel Lungin and Vsevolod Kozlovski, who had stunned Cannes in 1990 with *Two Blues* (Best Director) and *Step, Step, Step Again* (Cannes d'Or), were back with new work.

Kozlovski's *Semanticheskaya Igra* (*An Indiscreet Light*) continues the largely autobiographical story of Valerik (Pavel Nazarov). There is not a story as such, rather a largely unconnected series of self-contained scenes, mostly concerned with Valerik's coming to terms with his own sexuality and how sex is



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treated in society. Everything is fearfully directed and strikingly composed, but the effects are strikingly unconvincing: nowhere does Karavala generate the power of the first film.

Karavala also responds believably bringing back the actress who played Galia, the girl killed at the end of the first film, as Galia's previously unknown sister, Valia. Quite clearly, actress Dinara Droukova is playing the same character and Karavala is aware of this and others. In this most post-modern of worlds, why did he not just reintroduce her? Why should a screen death mean a character can't live on?

Visually, the film is often starting, but too often Karavala is obsessed with a striking technique when nothing is happening dramatically. It is overkill and reminds the viewer: How many dancing two-steps of people doing and saying nothing does he really need? There are brief moments of tenderness, as with the separation of Valerka and Valia at the end, but, yet again, Karavala has a girl die in pain for the male to find himself.

As well, Karavala's concentration on horrific images distancing apart from merely reflecting the incidence of how bad life could be in Russia (and that hardly needs), what is the point of no dramatic energy comes out of it. Almost as if acknowledging this, Karavala tries to be even more horrific than before with a particularly bloody abortion, endless scenes of violence and a sequence where Valerka does not see with his hand sets them slight. The image of having one's journey in terror and agony into

the night is unforgettable, but Karavala evokes nothing more meaningful than nihilistic horror in his staging with a scene.

In *Luna Park*, Pavel Longuevin deals with a modern problem: how to deal with gangs in cities like Moscow are trying to fill society of "undisciplined" (homosexuals, gays, Jews). It is a perverted new form of the 'dramatic' done in more realistic terms, and the representation of crime rings in Russia, for example, the gangs no totally run the city that it is closed off from the rest of Russia and the world.

Longuevin opens boldly with a bloody fight on a road close in front of the Moscow parliament (instead of Yeltsin heavily making a career out of crime, here age is unleashed in an orgy of physical violence inspired by Mad Max with motor-bikes, spiked tyres and knives ripping into flesh, and blood splattering on the muddy ground).

As in *Tim Blom*, where Longuevin takes a very Dostoevskian view of a shifting 'master and servant' relationship between a taxi driver and his passenger, here he focuses in similar manner (though less precisely) on the relationship between a gang leader and his long-lost father.

Andrei (Andrei Goltsov) and Aliona (Natalia Igumenova) run a Moscow gang, hanging out in a local amusement park with many roller coasters to symbol in many ways for Longuevin of the path of modern Soviet history. One day, Aliona dismisses Andrei by telling him he has a Jewish father. This means immediate expulsion from the gang, and a troubled journey for Andrei looking for his father and reconciling his anti-semitic hatred with his own culture.

Andrei's father is Noyan Blumstein (Oleg Borisov), whom Andrei first thinks of killing, but slowly comes to realize to. And out of this confusing, troubled relationship, Andrei emerges with a new sense of identity, even given the 'savage' events at the end. Just as Tim Blumstein chronically, the 'master' such in his inability to change and the 'servant' now the more powerful, here Andrei learns that the darkness taken in life may be mistaken ones, but it is only through individual action does change come — within oneself and in society at large.

Of course, it is impossible not to read this as a political allegory. But what matters most to Longuevin is the personal journey forward. Clearly he sees change in Russia coming from individual ideology, not from one of the left or right. In that sense, despite the bleak violence of much of his images, the film is a deeply optimistic one. That was missed by the many who were turned off by the film's darkness. Yet here is a film in which the director actually poses a solution, instead of resorting to the ultimate cop-out of "It is not for me to suggest solutions, but to pose questions."

What makes *Luna Park* as a film, and makes it a somewhat disappointing follow-up to *Tim Blom*, is the clumsiness of many scenes and a fairly progressive structure (the director has admitted the script was rushed). As well, Longuevin's obsession with depicting violence (like Australian Geoffrey Wright's in the not dissimilar, but much more aggressive, *Simple Sinner*) is off-putting, like Karavala, one steps on he enjoys the staging of it a bit too much.

From France come the two films under *Competition*. The first, though least liked, was *Melito Chard's* *Les Fils du Jaban*. It is the story of three women prison inmates sharing, by accident, a 24-hour pass of leave. Brilliantly choreographed, shot and edited, with solid performances from Marie Schreider, Laure Duthail and Claire Wilton, the film is infused with unusual sweetness and caring.





SECOND TAKE: WHICH (JACQUES) CASSENOUS (ALAN DELON) MEETS HIS WIDOW (DELIA BOCCARDO) AFTER HIS DEATH. LEFT: CASSENOUS (ALAN DELON) AND HIS WIDOW (DELIA BOCCARDO) IN A SCENE FROM THE FILM

The film conceals most powerfully the sense of how one misjudgement can mean much of a person's life is effectively over (its paraphrase: a loss of dialogue). We are all capable of such mistakes and it is hard to think of any other film, not even George Stevens' *A Place in the Sun* (1951), which so fluently conveys that.

Equally affecting is the gradual development of friendship between these young women. Though these adventures together are necessarily counter-effect (swimming for a swim, drinking coffee, sharing a night club, walking the streets), there evolves a delicate and precious bond that, without a hint of sentimentality, is quietly moving.

Where *Chaos* does make a misjudgement is in having each character go into cinematic mode in the style of 1950s American films ("Suddenly, last summer..."). The stories they relate, straight into the lens, are not always riveting (and indeed to be lampooned all over Cannes by critics). Neither are these stories necessary, because we know intuitively these women are unfortunate victims, typical of anyone who has made a mistake through hope or judgement, rather than managerial technique. Specific explanations are not needed.

That aside, *Les Destinées* is a small gem. It is hard to explain adequately the joy of seeing a film about women, especially after all these films in Cannes about men finding themselves, where women are at best peripheral catalysts.

One such film is Edouard Groussier's *Le Destinée de Cassenois*, the story of the aging Cassenois (Alain Delon). Barred from returning to his beloved Venice, Cassenois finds out in France with his faithful, and some times amusing, manservant, Camille (Fabrice Luchini). But even in the provinces of the south, Cassenois finds it hard to get away from his "legendary" sexual status, especially when he has no money and satisfying a female body is often the only way to satisfy an outstanding hole in his.

The inevitable irony is that Cassenois should finally fall in love – and with someone disinterested in him: Marceline (Ella) is a modern-minded and spirited girl with an interest in astrology (the

lives at her uncle's chateau, where Cassenois goes as a privileged guest, having been in a way responsible for the coming together of Olive (Gilles Arbois) and his wife, Aurélie (Delia Boccardo). What Olive, of course, does not realize is that all that Aurélie ever dreams of is a scene again sleeping with Cassenois. But for Cassenois the first conquest is all, and returning to the site of previous conquest has no interest for him.

So the scheming begins, Aurélie to bed Cassenois, and Cassenois to bed Marceline. In the process, Marceline takes possession of a society ruled by class and notions of approved behaviour. There is, for example, a deliciously subtle scene where an elderly Marquis (Alain Cuny) takes on and destroys at cards Marceline's parrot as lover, Laurent (Wadeck Stanczak).

While the first half of the film resembles a scabrous version of *Angélique* (Michel Deville, 1988), the second has an eerie close to toward darkness as Cassenois is allowed to return to Venice on the condition he spy for the State. The end is a pass along the old buildings of the Grand Canal, with the dramatic poisoning of Cassenois and his confederates on the gondola, suggest Cassenois is heading toward death. In a sense, it is an inevitable fate for one who had no rely on trickery to get his sexual way (he earned Marceline's dark bedroom diagnosed as Laurent, who she bought killed, fairly, in a duel).

The film was described by Nick Ruskoch (in *Moving Picture International*, the daily bible at Cannes) as a good example of an old-fashioned French film made for a European audience. That it is competent, enjoyable, and liked by the presence of a star (Delon) and by excellence in period recreation. Ultimately, though, it is a less-than-masterly film and somewhat opaque.

What underlines one's respect for the extremely powerful and mostly unaltered that the director shows no interest in the life of Marceline. Her realization next morning that she has been tricked by Cassenois's disguise (and why did not Cassenois's inevitably different sexual technique give him away?) is allowed only a brief close-up and a gap. The make it soon re-emerge. Despite having been set up as an extremely modern and independent woman, Niemman loses Marceline since, just as Cassenois has done with his innumerable other conquests.

The third French film in Competition was *La Dernière nuit*, which features from Arnold Denkielchen, who graduated from Alfred Hitchcock the same class as René Clément (who has already made two important features, *Une Femme en Pleine Vie* and *Une Femme en Pleine Vie*), and Christian Vincent (who directed the notorious *La Dernière nuit*, which is yet to be seen in Australia).

Denkielchen has all the makings of a wunderkind (it is *La Dernière nuit*, even if his film is only mildly successful. At its best, his direction is crisp and pointed, though some scenes are rather perfectly directed (pass back and forth between necessary compromised (close-ups). He shows evidence of director who will fashion a strong personal style, and he gets good performances from his largely young cast.

This story is a political tale of skeletons that refuse to be buried (in this case a murdered head). Mathias Baudry (Renzo Montalvo), the son of a diplomat and brought up in Germany, is haunted on his late journey back to France by a shadowy figure of the political underworld (who plans the head in Mathias' suitcase). A medical student, Mathias spends the rest of the film trying to discover whose head it was and in the process, the arrogant behind today's post-war politics. The lesson is that cold war game-playing then had



that on weekends while the series was in production. There is nothing, except for a bit of sex, that one can't get from the series media.

The story is such a very dull, the ending clichéd. Sheryl Lee, of course, has now gone from being cast as corpse to playing the lead role in a feature, so her less-than-stellar performance is arguably neither here. What is surprising is the way Lynch referred to her in his press conference as a great actress, a great find.

Most critics, in a state of shock at why these did had fallen so far, concentrated on the violence. Yes, the film is deeply offensive in its lurid portrait of violence (thereby matching its subtitle to sex and language). But Lynch made no convincing attempt to justify his pornography of violence, arguing instead that as a director he is interested in everything. But known film contradictions here: the sex and violence sequences are directed with far more attention to detail, number of camera positions and intricacy of movement than anything else. Scenes of sex involving from X to Y, or one character explaining a plot point to another, are perfunctorily shot, often in a bland single shot.

Take too the sound. When a bullet enters a brain, the sound is a marvel of post-production and symbolism: Lynch makes death sound delicious. No such care or consideration is accorded to things on ground, or in

Also in Competition was Hal Hartley's third film, *Simple Men*. It is a very slowly-paced tale of two brothers searching for their radical, on-the-run father. Like the work of Jim Jarmusch and Ben Driver, the film has off-beat, fringe-of-society characters, dialogue based on deconstructionist language and with an idiosyncratic edge, as if western civilization (and cinema) has exhausted itself. All stories have been told, all emotions played out, all natural goodness evaporated. Only the ending contradicts this, which was controversially punished from Robert Reisman's *Philadelphia*.

The acting is minimalist, the framing precious and the whole some thing about its own cleverness. That is strictly for Hartley fans.

Then again, just as an early cut looks tempting, one glimpses hints of a technically-unsound style being developed. And behind the veneer there is a tension between the children and a sweetness which suggests a much more interesting filmmaker at work. One will have to wait and see.

Also disappointing was *Crash*, the first feature of New Zealand director Alison Maclean, who made the heralded short film *Alison's Sink*. *Crash* is a remarkably flawed work, typifying too many of the misgivings of its first up filmmaking.

The story concerns two women, Lane (Marcus Goy Hunter) and Christine (Donagh Rose), whose friendship turns to revengeful post-playing after a car crash when Lane was the wheel. Into their small world enter an androgynous adolescent girl, Angela (Chloe Bonley), and her writer father, Colin (William Sapp). As feelings and sexual desire change, so inevitably does

the story fabric that holds aberrant behavior in check.

This black film, made with care to rendering every location and person as ugly as possible (so sometimes rather strained effect), stretches its premise to breaking point. The sub aspects are not creatively handled (in all too monotone and obvious), and the drama is denied of interest. Made as this does not help her cause with dull performance all round (save the enigmatic Bonley's), very poor post-dubbing and sound mixing, and less-than-convincing photography.

No film in Competition was more poorly reviewed in print and its inclusion was solely seen as testimony to the dire shortage of interesting work by women directors. Still, at least New Zealand got a film in Competition, which is more than Australia could manage.

From *Sengul* came Gilbert Diaz Montebello's *Mykonos*, a rewriting of Friedrich Schlegel's play *Die Schicksale der Frauen* (*The Fates*).

Largely known (Ann Doherty), an old woman and now unmarried widow, returns after twenty years her native coastal village of Gokkara. Seeing the dire poverty all around her, she promises to help, but only if her one-time lover, and the village thespian, Dr. Manu (Manu Manu), is cured for having forsaken paternity of her child. The villagers indignantly refuse, but the promise soon builds.

The film is always allegorical and clearly so at the end where Dr. Manu's fate is visually linked with that of a modernized Sengul. Well shot and with a particularly likable cast of characters (save the sister Saravali), *Mykonos* is an enjoyable film. From a cinema-space country, it is also quite remarkable.

By world standards, however, the film takes a strong narrative drive and the complexity of Dr. Manu's plot is levelled out here to some-track some. Still, allegorically it needs to be simple and the film's social value in Sengul is impossible to judge from here.

Real Spain's Spanish-French *L'Elle est là* (*She is There*) is a long attempt at a realism that gained few fans (not being David Semel). An ostensibly bilingual coproduction, it makes one only too aware the disparity between minor (Luis Bonaldi) and several people. Little will be said for it until an Andrea Martini takes up its cause.

Also shown in Competition, but unwatched by this critic, were Gary Sinise's *Of Men and Men*, which was warmly received but was also accused of being old-fashioned, the acclaimed *Lady by Camille* Jean-Claude Lattès, and Fernando Solanas' *El Vago* (*The Journey*). Special Screenings included Ron Howard's *Mean Streets* and *Amey*, the revised *Deaths of Dean Wells*, Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* and Vincent Ward's *Twelve* (progress), *Mykonos* and *Mykonos*.

Cannes '92

Gianni Amelio's *The Stolen Children*

This year at Cannes, Gianni Amelio won the Jury Prize for *Il Ladro di Bambini* (*The Stolen Children*), the story of an 11-year-old girl who has been forced into prostitution, and the young policeman who escorts her and her brother to a children's home in Sicily. It is a moving plea for a society in which children and adults can once again freely interact.

Gianni Amelio first stunned American film lovers with his extraordinary and powerful *Colpo di Cuore* (*Siberian Heart*), which was shown at the festival and on HBO. It was an unsettling analysis of terrorism told through the story of a father (Jean Louis Trintignant) and his teenage son (Enrico Rossa).

The next Amelio seen in America was *Pelle Aspera* (*Open Heart*), which many critics rightly praised as the best adaptation of a Leonardo Sciascia novel since Francesco Rosi's *Cadaveri Sconosciuti* (*Unidentified Corpse/The Guest*). Coming from a culture where Sciascia dominated the literary scene in a way no one had since Lampedusa, that was no insignificant achievement.

This year's Cannes Festival saw the screening of his latest venture, *The Stolen Children*.

What gave you the idea for *The Stolen Children*?

It came to me three years ago, after seeing a photograph in a newspaper in a horrifying article about a woman who had turned her eight-year-old daughter into a prostitute. And the photo showed the little girl from behind as she walked down the street holding a grown man's hand.

That photo was highly ambiguous, as often occurs with images, whether photographs or television pictures, without words or captions to explain them. But the caption here was "The girl being taken to a children's home by a policeman."

That was how the film came about, and also because I wanted to tell a story about the things that are happening all round us: a film that shares the discomfort that we are all aware of.

What relationship is there between *The Stolen Children* and your previous films?

Colpo di Cuore, *I Ragazzi di Via Panigleria* and *Pelle Aspera* are strictly "high profile" films, in terms of their contents and the messages that with terrorism, nuclear power, the death penalty). But in *The Stolen Children*, the problem was to find a sort of new purity of language while, at the same time, trying not to make it an issue, with a capital "I". Even the choice of the hero—a professional policeman—was for simplicity, and to wipe out any trace of intellectualism. I tried to avoid any intention to tell a story from the author's point of view and to recount events directly without trying to demonstrate anything or be metaphorical.



You have stressed the idea of the simplicity of the film but you have also rejected the intention of "authorship". Can you explain exactly what you mean by that?

"Rigour" has ended up by being exhibitionism in many instances. I find uncomfortable today about what I would call the author's arrogance. I see it as a different kind of mystification. Rosellini used to say, "I don't calculate anything. I know what to say, and I find the most direct way of saying it. That's all. I don't go to excessive lengths. If I say what I want to, it's not important how it is said."

What do you change when you are on the set? For example, how was the shooting of *The Stolen Children*?

Since this was a fairly low-budget film, without using established actors, I was able to treat the screenplay fairly freely, leaving considerable room to improvisation. That is something I always consider to be indispensable. I'm afraid of seeing the script on the screen all over again, even though I know that I wrote it.

On the set of *The Stolen Children*, I wrote the dialogues as we went along, changing the script as we filmed, bringing in new characters and cutting out others from the script. It's a risky way of working, and demands tremendous freedom of action.

From the point of view of the language, what has changed in your way of making films?



Children

Today we are being bombarded with far more images than we ever were ten or twenty years ago; you had to go out and look for images in those days, building them up. Today you have to strip them, keep them at arm's length. The main task now is to remove a fragment of an image, and then make it different, detached in one way or another from everything that the people see before their eyes every day on the television screen. And then you offer them a kind of value-added, a different coefficient. I think that this "extra" something has to be suggested through things, detached from any preconceived ideas or formal constraints.

Does this mean emphasizing the documentary aspect of the cinema?

Remove once and something quite extraordinary. The reality that we show today with the camera must be protected as far as possible by closing the doors on true reality, but, when it comes to filming, this has to be done by leaving a window ajar by accident, as it were, so that something can come in that will be able to

correct all your plans. The real language of the cinema comes about moment by moment, and it is often things that suggest it to you. That does not change the fact that the main job has to be done in the planning phase, choosing situations rather than accumulating things, sticking to a feeling, an idea, that subsequent communications can perhaps enrich, but not wipe out. Directing is like an erasing the set, shooting, are only the visible part above the surface.

Your film shows a seriously failing Italy: a national environment, degraded human relations.

It shows a country which no longer makes what is wrong with it. The atmosphere of *The Stolen Children* is quite different from that of the neo-realist films; it has sometimes been compared with. People in those films were the post-war Italians, who suffered the disaster that had befallen them, and were determined to put it behind them. Today, they belong to an apathetic and blocked Italy, which has given up any desire as far as a civil society, a country where such values as solidarity and dignity survive in the outsiders, the marginalized.

Children and teenagers play an important part in your films.

But the real protagonist is always the adult. The child is often the mask worn by the adult who has grown up, in all events, harder and more transparent than the adult, less willing to compromise. Children and teenagers are more like a mirror that gives a distorted reflection of the adult before them — a theme in his conscience.

How did you work with the two leading child actors and with a young theatre actor like Enrico Lo Verso?

It is important to choose the right actor for whatever role. Then you have to work on the actor and not on the character. In other words, always start with director and the way he used to do things, and make his character fit him rather than the other way round.

I am sometimes unhappy about too much emphasis being on composition, and so I always try to find something that breaks things down, surprises and brings something unexpected on to the screen. With children that is easy. They have a devilish spontaneity. Enrico Lo Verso was able to become an instant star. ■

[Reprinted from the Cannes press book on The Stolen Children.]



ABOVE: ENRICO LO VERSO, DIRECTOR AND CO-WRITER OF *A LITTLE IN LATE* IS SHOWN (IN SEVERAL SCENES), LEFT: MARIKA (PILARINA SCORIO) AND ANTONIO (PIRELLA GÖTTSCHE LOWE) ON THE SCREEN. ABOVE: ENRICO LO VERSO AND MARIKA (PILARINA SCORIO) IN *THE STOLEN CHILDREN*



Vitali Kanievski's *An Independent Life*

Vitali Kanievski made his first feature at the age of 54. Though having entered the Moscow film school in 1960, his studies were interrupted by eight years of jail. He finally received his diploma in 1977, but after two shorts was effectively blacklisted as a director in the Soviet Union.

Kanievski did not give up and in 1989 made *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again*, which won the Camera d'Or at Cannes the following year. In 1992 he was back with *Somnambulism* (aka *An Independent Life*), a continuation of the first film's largely autobiographical story.

Eighteen months ago you were about to make a film about Soviet prisons. Why did you prefer to make *An Independent Life*, the sequel to *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again*?

Right after Cannes (1990), I found it very difficult to get back to work. Emotions had been running so high for so long. During the shooting of *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again*, I was afraid that I'd never be able to make another movie. I had the impression that I was dying, falling apart. Then the film's reception by the public in the West had a very similar effect on me.

The second film I was planning, which was intended to be about prisons, needed far too much preparation, and the topic was too far removed from what I was experiencing, so that I decided to shoot the follow-up to *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again*. I didn't expect it to be so difficult, in the heart of a country in the middle of immense changes. It's a miracle that film ever saw the light of day—especially when one has to shoot in 60 different locations, in seven different towns, when money is the key to all relationships, when there is a strange sort of freedom in the air that doesn't make things any easier.

Why did you choose to film *An Independent Life* in color?

I don't consider the film to be so colorful. The work done on the film itself is very particular. When Stalin died, there was a sort of pink mist in the sky, white smoke; the film interpreted it this basic idea. It is not a technical procedure, it simply means removing all the colorful elements from the scenery and costumes. Take the opening scene, for instance, of the horse in the snow: looking at it, one doesn't know whether the film is going to be in black and white or in color.

On the other hand, from time to time I use very strong colors, but then it is to show something unusual—one of the characters' wishes or dreams, such as the folk dancers on the two bridges as the blind man crosses the bridge. They play on colors to follow the complex narrative pattern of the film.

I think there are a few breaks in the structure that will surprise a little: I have followed the rhythm of my main character who is in a period of his life where he is capable of sharp and sudden changes of personality. I also chose visual and sound



elements, so that the spectator will become back and forth to a screen. The film is a lot less naive than *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again*.

An Independent Life opens with a voice singing off screen, and a horse moving along in the snow. Then suddenly the voice says, "That's not he." The film wheels back and then starts again. Is this you giving advance warning that the film is shot in the first person singular, that the story will be told from a subjective point of view?

There is indeed all of that. But, throughout the whole film, there is never a unique interpretation of a given moment or scene; many meanings.

The opening scene, for me, is about lies. It says that if you dream about a horse, a dog he wants you. I say that it is far better to go backwards a little than forwards into error, and that whatever you start, especially life itself, you are bound to come across beyond of some sort. But you can always get through these lies and betrayals.

Like your previous film, *An Independent Life* is openly autobiographical. Yet younger Golia, who dies at the end of *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again*, is played by the same young actress (Diana Evashkova). Did this person really exist?

To be honest, she was a cousin, and she didn't look like her that much. But I was so pleased with my little star that I wanted to use her again.

Also, in the beginning of the film, even though Valerka has grown up, he still needs a guardian angel, represented alternately by Golia and Valka. You know, *Don't Move, Die and Rise Again* was originally to be called "The Guardian Angel."

t Life



Then Valerka has grown up, and the story of his "independence" parallels the story of his sexual initiation. The hero discovers sex in all its forms: the soft embrace of love, the violence of rape, the horror of a backstreet abortion. The film possesses a crudeness which contemporary art no longer used to.

All this draws from my own life, and I hope my so-film is in the most delicate way possible, I try to deal with it seriously. Valerka doesn't know how to go about it, he is completely disarmed. Take for example the scene when his neighbor, Sofia Arkadievna, throws herself at him. If I hadn't cut the dialogue, the scene would have been crude, maybe even vulgar. But in order to keep the feeling of tenderness that I remember of this scene, the sequence had to be where

What makes Valerka so seductive?

The fact that he is independent, that he can look after himself. He is capable of being violent. The difference between his appearance and his attitude is what makes him seductive. He also has a certain innocence

about him, a pure sort of unawareness that makes him want to seduce girls who are "too good for him", like a little puppy that throws itself at an enormous dog. Sometimes it works.

Throughout the film Valerka is exposed to very extreme violence, yet it doesn't seem to affect him.

He is growing up and, back home, violence is not considered cruel. We beat everyone: husbands beat their wives, wives beat their husbands. Do you know the one about the two Soviet wives? The first one says: "My husband doesn't love me these days." "What makes you think that?", asks the second one. "He doesn't beat me anymore!"

And Valerka is also at an age where he shakes easily from laughter to tears. You can make a child cry and he'll come back laughing a few seconds later. He goes so emotional over the death of his pig as over Gaba's death. This is why there are fairly brutal changes of mood throughout the film.

But does this unawareness make Valerka innocent, especially concerning Valerka's death?

Are we really sure she is dead? Is it really her that fell into the water? Either way, Valerka is already dead in Valerka's mind. Is he guilty of

having betrayed her? It's human nature: "Out of sight, out of mind".

My own life is filled with mistakes, betrayals, stupid errors I have made. Maybe others live differently. We can always try to excuse everything, but nothing ever turns out the way we would have wanted it to.

What kind of relationship did you have with your two principal actors, Pavel Nazarov and Darya Dronikova, the same two who starred in your first film, *Don't Move, Die and Run Again*?

I have that they enjoy working with me. I know that we now have a very strong bond. Our relationship is based on love, and I sincerely believe that it cannot really go wrong.

In general, how do you direct your actors?

I show them exactly what they are supposed to do. That is to say I act it out for them first, it is not simply showing them, it is really acting. To play a child, I become like a child again. Of course, on the shoot it makes everyone laugh more than anything else but I carry on anyway. And I do the same for every character in the sequence, even for an extra in the far background. Everyone has a precise job to do, a calculated move to make which I block. Normally I only shoot two takes.

Using non-professional actors is very complicated because one pays them some money, they tend to overact a bit, thinking that they have to earn their money. That's the worst part, once they have delivered their lines they turn straight round to me, as if to ask: "How was it?" One has to be extremely vigilant with details like that.



ABOVE: VALERKA (PAVEL NAZAROV), THE ANTI-HERO, REMINDS US OF THE BOYS FROM THE EASTERN / SOUTHERN EUROPE. ONE OF HIS FIRST FILMS, LEFT: PAVEL NAZAROV (VALERKA) AND DARYA DRONIKOVA (GABA), AN INDEPENDENT JOE.

Vitali Kanievski

The end of the film is openly metaphorical. First there is the settling fire of the flaming rats, then the strange manuscript, in which Valerik seems to recover his memories, and finally the couple running naked. It seems as if there is no difference between man and beast. Is that what you were looking for?

Absolutely. It is the triangle of universal forces.

The running couple would seem like human beings. But you know, when a child finds himself in a pack of wolves, he starts to run like a wolf!

This is followed by the final monologue which Valerik speaks facing the camera and in which he explains the meaning of the tattoo on his chest. We get the impression that he addresses not only the spectators but that he speaks directly to you, that he is about to step out into liberty. The chapter of memories is concluded, the begins.

I couldn't find another way to end the film. Valerik is also speaking to himself. The two triangles he has formed on his chest represent a woman and a man, and even as he is explaining this, Valerik discovers the simplicity of things: the fact that the masculine and feminine principles are inseparable, not even because, when he begins to grow up.

One supposes then that there will not be a third film as openly autobiographical.

If you say so! It is true that things are getting worse and more difficult. I will leave this person project.

Isn't it a very strange and unique film project to want to tell one's life story in such detail?

But my life resembles millions of Soviet lives. Practically everyone has lived in this kind of atmosphere. And in the four corners of the ex- USSR, even in its most remote provinces, life was the same: the same buildings, the same rooms, the same machinery.

All the same, there are moments of happiness — moments that are more beautiful in memory than they were in reality.

Yes, I put on remembering the jolly moments. Take the drink and for example: in his own way he is happy in his puddle in Nikolavsk. You know, every Russian has spent at least a couple of hours of his life in a muddy puddle of water, just like him.

Do you feel you have a calling to serve as witness, as a sort of spokesman?

No. I don't have anything in particular to say. It is enough that I've worked in all sorts of jobs in my life, but never have I felt as much pleasure, such intensity, as in making films. That's except maybe when I was a child.

(Reprinted from the *Cinema* press book.)



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Australian Films

Australian films received a mixed reception at Cannes this year. On the one hand, Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom* won the kind of acclaim that most first-time directors dream about. Not so the other Australian films that went to Cannes like so many little piggies to market, and came home again, unsold and (one assumes) critically unloved.

At the midnight screening which introduced *Strictly Ballroom* to Cannes, the audience really did dance to the music in response to the film's optimistic and infectious dance rhythms. And who counts, precisely, the number of minutes that constitute a prolonged seizure? Two, fifteen, twenty minutes on our first clapping? It seemed a very long time.

If *Strictly Ballroom* failed to garner the critical reception accorded *Platoon* last year, it was nonetheless admired and enjoyed by critics and the general public alike for its energy and originality. Like *Platoon*, it narrowly missed winning the Cannes d'Or for best first film by a director, by three votes to four (the award this year being won by Johan Tjarrar's *Mag*), and, before Cannes was over, the movie was out that *Strictly Ballroom* had been sold worldwide. By any criteria, *Strictly Ballroom* was a success.

But this review of Australian films at Cannes is concerned less with the success or not of Australian films in the marketplace than with noting the further development of an idiosyncratic, semi-cosmopolitan cinema—a cinema which appears especially distinct when viewed against the larger backdrop of world cinema at Cannes. While it would be foolish to deny that in some aspects some of these films are missing the mark, it can be regretted that because they are not endorsed without reservation by the world market (which, in many instances, is precisely the U.S., France and Italy, for example), we tend to tuck these films down, exhibiting an our enthusiasm at perceived failure yet another version of the great Australian orange.

Strictly Ballroom was a crowd pleaser at Cannes for several reasons. It is a flamboyant and imaginative film, with an upbeat ending that makes people feel good. It also has a ingenue, maverick quality about it which is as engaging and attractive as its young star, Paul Mercurio.

Mercurio plays Scott Hastings, a ballroom champion who floats conversations and brings the wrath of the all-powerful President of the Federation of Ballroom Dancing (Bill Hunter) down on his head when he dares to dance his own steps.

In the 1970s, John Backus inspired all the little beauty and unbelieveable ballroom dancing in a series of surreal paintings which amazed the dancers' great determination. Director Baz Luhrmann captures this in his film, but carries it a stage further. He uses ballroom dancing as a metaphor for sexual growth, and depicts this stylized dance form, with its strict conventions, as a



straitjacket stifling creativity and free expression. He also sees it as a gargantuan struggle between youth and authority.

The optimism which is so appealing in *Strictly Ballroom* comes from the working through of an amalgam of myths and fairytales. David and Goliath, Jack the Giant Killer, Cinderella, even Sleeping Beauty. Goliath is slain when the Federation President is exposed as corrupt and a sham. Cinder, Scott's dancing partner Fran (Tara Morice), is transformed from a nobody into a somebody when she heeds the wise advice of her Spanish grandmother, while the first person awakened from its polyphasic tor in the Federation is Scott's father, Doug (Barry Otto), who encourages him on to victory.

These fairytales thrust give the film its universal appeal, but the European reviewers are whistles only. What gives the film its specific appeal is its Australian content, which is owed to setting the world through Australian eyes.

Luhrmann, who is a director of theatre and opera, stages his film with all the lush, gaudy brightness of a Hollywood spectacle. From behind a red curtain bordered with twinkling Disneyesque stars, dancers are seen in silhouette, striking poses to the strains of "The Blue Danube." The various fluster apart revealed the dancers' historically garbed and conflicted, and lashed in fantasies. The women's heavily made-up faces are wreathed in flood smiles, while the men, poker straight, look absurdly strong and correct. Any moment one expects to see a grinning Norman Gannon grab the mike. Instead, gray officials are represented by Ian Kennedy (Peter Whitford) in powder-blue jacket and glowering white wig, while in the background the President glowers darkly beneath eyebrows as heavily weighed as Robert

at Cannes

[illegible]

Mexico: Above all else floats the banner, "VOLUNTARIOS CAMPEA CON NOSOTROS!"

Australians are good at smacking themselves up. Social and political satire and theatrical surrealism have, however, Australian works on video, thanks to the talents of filmmakers such as Barry Humphries, Barry Crispin, John Clarke, Moya Gillett and others. The debunking of pretension and ideas, alongside a deeply-embedded mistrust of authority, has been responsible for the emergence in Australian culture of a distinctive style of lampooning and parodying icons in everyday life, where this impulse to not down to size is manifested in the tall-poppy syndrome, it can be cruel. In film, it is generally more benign and problem-oriented, as in *Society Dailies*, where the bias of some against authoritarians, prejudice and stifling conformity is blamed by the film's good intentions and irreverent good sense.

David Caesar's *Greenpeace* is another film which pokes fun at convention, power and prejudice. The small film has a quality script and treats some of the major issues confronting a changing Australia - rising debt, declining standards of living and fears about the competitive Japanese - in an

Lenny (Mark Linley) is a good-natured, not-overly bright Aussie battler employed as the greenkeeper at a local bowling club, who discovers one day that the green which his mates religiously, and of which he is very proud, is turning brown in large patches. This isn't his only problem: his father, based away, Sue (Lisa Hensley), who watches dog and catches television all day in her decaying house, but

incurred a debt of \$5000, which unless he repays within three days will result in him forfeiting his recently purchased and dearly-beloved Holden car.

Like Australia, Leary's life is at a crossroads, and much of the pleasure of the film lies in observing the interplay of behavior between Leary, struggling to put him back together in difficult times, and his boss in the club, old BSL member who finds the changing face of Australia—in particular, the Asians who play there—hard to deal with, and Rikyu (Kazuo Maruyama), a Japanese member who insists on challenge to the bowling supremacy of one old World War II ace (Shelton Longenecker)—difficult to handle.

Developing has much to offer the performance of Latin and Mestizo life and ways (through Blas Galindo's *Ternito* film). It has touches of delightful humour (including a clowning muggle that forces the leader to wear plastic bunnions on his heels), and, with affection for the old genre that it celebrates, it succeeds in capturing a moment in time as Aztecian leads from an Anglo-Celtic past into an uncertain multi-cultural future. Whilst pit, there, that the film is spoiled by technical flaws. Whether by design or errors in the colour grading, indoor sequences in natural colour are at odds with garish outdoor sequences that at times look blurred. This mis-matching, deliberate or otherwise, is distracting to an otherwise accessible, sincere cinema.

Multi-culturalism and racial mix was a theme one way or another in over half of the ten Australian and New Zealand films viewed at Cannes.

Simply Sullivan uses literature and Spanish culture as a yardstick against which to judiciously measure Australian Anglo-



Australian Films at Cannes

[illegible]

Celtic culture, which is seen within the film's image of reference as closed and receptive, lacking spontaneity and warmth.

In Gillian Armstrong's *The Last Days of Chen Shui*, the cross-cultural marriage between an Australian writer and an expatriate Frenchman can be seen not only as a commentary on the synergy of both geographic and psychological distance. More properly, however, it highlights the difficulty of exploring an Australian context through traditional, European themes such as consciousness and angst, without first interposing them into a convincing Australian version.

Armanoug's film, from an original screenplay by Helene Gaudon, focuses on Beila (Lisa Harrow), the well-meaning but bossy head of an Israeli city council, which includes her husband, Yoni Parritz (Bruno Ganz), who is feeling increasingly displaced in Australia, her sister Vicki (Levy Pass), who has just returned from an extended stay in Europe, and her teenage daughter, Anna (Miriam Chodoff-Bell). In combination, her needs as a writer and her desire to control the fate of others. She is also trying to work through her relationship with her dominating father (Bibi Horvitz) at the same time as her marriage to Yoni is collapsing, and she is surprised when she discovers, on return from an outbreak holiday with her intractable father, that she has suddenly lost the power to man other people's lives.

The last days of *Class Nina* is a musical play which mixes the work. Some of that has to do with patchy acting and a lack of clear definition as to what makes the characters really tick, but much of it is the fault of the script, which feels contrived, despite the many being intrinsically interesting and grounded in real life. *Class Nina* is a chamber piece about people struggling to make meaning from their lives. The personalities of the characters are "European" and funny, underlain subtly by considering who they are, yet too many scenes in the film, particularly those framed within Beth's disordered terrace house – the madness of her behaviour and artistic self – are interrupted by dialogue which sounds self-conscious, artificial and contrived.

The most successful scenes in the film are those which are most ordinary: for example, the tense family scene in which in Beth's parents' home in suburban Sydney, or the long, frequently-recurring outback sequences where the desolate beauty of the landscape is allowed to underline the psychological distance between father and daughter.

When we have played the generic sentimental Australian, reflect on about something like when his daughter asks him what he thinks about God and death, and misanthropic of affection. He replies instead with an ironic, morbid, connoisseur's sort of distill of or embellishment, which is eloquent beyond language. It is not that Australians do not think about or discuss at length serious issues, it is simply that we dislike talking about them without first masking our feelings with irony and self-protection. This reticence and suspicion of mismanagement of social interaction. Films such as *The Last Days of Chen Xue*, which ignore or fail to accommodate this subtlety, do not come close.

It is worth noting that Ray Atgill's *Sight Rail*, though less successful in many ways than his previous film, *Native Affairs*, demonstrates that contemporary social changes, such as the acceptance of changing sex roles and the softening of Australian men's attitudes, are by no means incompatible with this pervasive and, to most Australian sensibilities, appalling propensity to the suspicion of infamy. The recent prominence of Australian women everywhere, almost without exception all forms, a situation reminiscent of Norway's powerful internationalist feminist shadow over the country, an Australian figure.

Australian culture is not quarantined from what is happening elsewhere. But as Ben Lakerman commented after the success of his film at Cannes, distance, geography and cultural, makes a difference.

Carol Wright's *Bomber Bomber*, a violent film which depicts a skin-head racist rightwinger tramping somewhere in the western suburbs, threatening to overthrow Australian society as the 'Asian Invasion' continues unabated in retrospective time. It



another Antipodean version of a world-wide preoccupation with the re-emergence of neo-Nazism. That time there is less Australian nationalism and the arguably cringing capacity of Australian race is humor is completely missing. For this reason, the film is disappointing. This is not, however, sufficient reason for arguing that the film shouldn't have been made, as one Australian critic, David Stratton, was apparently moved to say.

Smoker Smoker is appealing because it is convincing. Wright may well be hell in love with the energy and violence he deploys on the screen, but so his development of the narrative and treatment of character is so clear that he is not succumbing to argument in favor of antisocial and racist behavior, as some critics have suggested. Rather, he delineates with great skill the situation that can trigger explosions of violence among nihilistic, dispossessed

and abused youth, and profiles with accuracy the homophobic self-hatred that has behind the burning desire of many charismatic fascist leaders to destroy the world (Harden, played with repressed power by Russell Crowe).

There is nowhere to be found in *Smoker Smoker* the pathos in acting and directing that has blighted several Australian films recently, and Wright is able to handle rapid mood shifts and complex character developments—specifically the relationship between Gabe (Jacqueline McKenzie) and Dorey (Daniel Pollock) without jarring the film's relentless rhythm. The film's racism is ugly, and is depicted as being so.

The contention that vilified *Smoker Smoker* incites and encourages violence and racism is a serious one, at least unpersuasive. This is an important debate, growing in prominence, which deserves serious discussion.

Two films by New Zealanders were based in Australia: were screened in the Official Selection at Cannes. Alison MacLean's *Crash*, a dear film about a car crash into the tangled lives of three women and one man, all of them unattractive characters despite the charms of the film's female leads, played by Marina Gay Harden, and Vincent Ward's *Map of the Human Heart*, a flawed blockbuster about an Irish Eborian, Ark (Jason Scott Lee), whose path in life crosses that of another, a half-Cree Indian girl called Albertine with whom he bonds and meets again years later in London during World War II.

Shown Out of Competition and "work in progress," *Map of the Human Heart* has some breathtaking moments, including spectacular polar photography by Eduardo Berme, and a soaring recreation of the bonding of the side A. No doubt further editing will trim away some of the more expensable parts of the film's unruly plot (the appearance at the end of Ark's daughter, for example), but nothing unfortunately can make up for the misreading of Anne Parillaud as the whole Albertine, whose empty performance is in stark contrast to the capturing naturalism of the younger Albertine (Aimee Golegates).



LEFT: ANNE PARILLAUD AS ALBERTINE, JASON SCOTT LEE, WITH JESSIE HALE, AND IN CRASH: MARINA GAY, JESSIE HALE, AND IN THE LAST DAYS OF CRETE: MARINA GAY, AND LUCAS BOOTH (BEFORE ALBERTINE) AND JESSIE HALE. RIGHT: VINCENT WARD'S MAP OF THE HUMAN HEART





Cannes '92

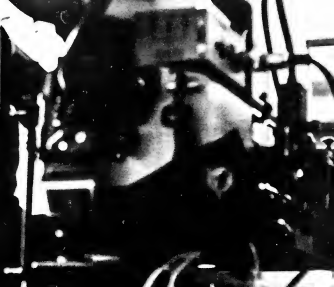
David Lynch's

Twin Peaks:

FIRE

Walk With Me

THE PRESS CONFERENCE



The *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* press conference at Cannes featured director and co-writer David Lynch, co-writer Robert Engels, actor Michael A. Anderson (who plays the Man From Another Place), composer Angelo Badalamenti and French producer Jean-Claude Flémy from Giffy 2000.

As is often the case, the press conference was chaired by Henri Béhar, a French journalist and critic who, apart from his long association with Cannes, has just written (with Carl Hiauchamp) a particularly witty and readable book on the Festival, *Hollywood on the Riviera: The Inside Story of the Cannes Film Festival*.

The following transcription follows as closely as possible the actual press conference. Where questions were asked in French, this is noted, but only Henri Béhar's English translation is given. The text has been edited for less than is usual to keep as much of the *Séance* as possible.

Obviously, questions posed by journalists whose first language is not English are not always grammatically straightforward; equally, David Lynch has an unusual way with English.

It is a requirement at all press conferences that journalists identify themselves before asking a question, but in many cases names were not given; in others, the names were so mumbled transcription was impossible. Thus, for conciseness's sake, all names are deleted. (Incidentally, the Australian journalist referred to at one point is not this writer but from ABC television.)

If David Lynch seems here forthcoming then one might suspect the poor reception (of blinding and looking) when he entered may have been partly to blame. Apparently, though, Lynch was unaware of the negative response his film had just received at the press screening in the Grand Palais.

David Lynch

Mr David Lynch, I have a two-part question to ask you. The first part is: When you started to make the films, what did you really want—need—to add to a series which has been all around the world? The second part is: For those people who did not know anything about *Twin Peaks* the series, do you think the films is underappreciated? From the beginning, we are supposed to know who the characters are.

Lynch: It happened to be so close to the world of *Twin Peaks* and the characters that were there. I wanted to go back into the world before it started on the series and to see what was there, to actually see things that we had [only] heard about.

There is a danger, of course, that the more you know about anything, the more depth of appreciation you can get from it. [sic] But I think, although I have been wrong many

may have been on *Blue Velvet*. And Mr. Henry, did you give David Lynch each month and a free hand?

[Henry responds in untranscribed French, "then sure..."], the point being that Lynch and all the directors working within CBS 1990 have a free hand.]

Lynch: I don't preferencing [sic] François as well, but I feel very free, very free.

Mr David Lynch, many characters from the television series are not in this movie, like Audrey. Why?

Lynch: There are different reasons. Some scenes were deleted, they just didn't fit within the story. And some characters, even in the script, didn't find themselves in the story. It was a little bit of a sadness because I would have liked to have everybody there, but they didn't have a bearing on the life of Laura Palmer as much as her last work.

Mr Lynch, I really loved your film, and I would like to ask you questions for you. The first question: What is reality for you?

[Laughter from audience and Lynch.]

Lynch: In 32 words or less.

Lynch: I haven't got a clear what a reality. I'm sure I'll be surprised when I learn what it is.

My second question is whether we can consider your film as anti-drugs film?

Lynch: Well, sure, you know, you could look at it that way if you would like to. [Laughter.]

[Frankly?] We have every young following, Mr Lynch. Are you not afraid to make drugs scenes desirable? There is a line in the film which says "All young Americans..."

Lynch: Half... half. [Laughter.]

"Half of the youth in America are on drugs."

Lynch: That was a little bit of a joke. It is very dangerous. If we didn't want to upset anyone, we would make films about smoking, but even that could be dangerous. [Laughter.]

So it's hard to say. But I think, finally, is a film in it how the balance is and the feelings are.

Film exists because we can go and have experiences that would be pretty dangerous or strange for us in real life. We can go into a room and walk into a dream. It doesn't necessarily follow that you are going to go out and start shooting bottles or taking coke. You

worry about it. But I think there has to be these controls and strong things within a film for the total experience.

I have a question for Mr Lynch, and maybe one for Mr. Badalamenti. Congratulations on the film. I had the impression at the end of it that what David's been watching was perhaps an American nightmare, rather than the American dream. Can you comment on that?

Lynch: That is a good impression that you got. [Laughter.]

The life [?] of the American dream appears always in films. We are very aware of the idea of the dream. You are playing with the whole idea of family and social conscience. Are you trying to attack the American dream?

Lynch: No, I was trying to make the story of Teresa Banks [who is murdered in the movie] and the last seven days of Laura Palmer. [Applause.]

Mr. Badalamenti, to me this film also has elements of horror, and gothic horror. In your writing of the series, did you consider that as an element of the film?

BADALAMENTI: Actually, I think the scoring is more darkness than horror. We simply power through the darkness of the music. At least, that is what the intention was.

David Lynch, as a filmmaker, do you feel any responsibility for putting such violence in your movies?

Lynch: That is the same answer I'm going to give you that the other gentleman got into. I think this is a very dangerous [...]. These are shocking films for violence and not doing a whole lot in the world for violence. Film is a

"I think that it is very dangerous [...] that we are attacking films for violence and not doing a whole lot in the world for violence. Film is a safe place to have experiences."
DAVID LYNCH

describe the past, that someone could get very much from [the film] not having seen anything of the series.

There are things in there that they wouldn't understand as much as some others, who have seen the series. But observations are a good thing and they read all around in anyway. They sometimes can compare up a thrilling experience within the person.

Mr Lynch, as you are now under contract [to CBS 1990], I want to know if you feel as free as before *Blue Velvet*. Didn't you have agreements...?

Lynch: Are you asking whether CBS 1990 was a sponsor?

[Audience laughter followed by a conversation in French between the journalist who put the question and Lynch, who then translates the question.]

The question is to remember Henry and Lynch. It is well known that you, Mr Lynch, have signed a contract with CBS 1990. Do you feel as free under the terms of this contract as you

1 CBS has a three-picture deal with Lynch [but also licensed from Channel 4's *The Passion of Joan of Arc*]. The main producer "1990" of CBS 1990 is Richard to get the sitcom.



safe place to have experiences. Violence exists, it has a major part in a lot of human actions. If [the film] was championing violence it would be one thing, but I don't think it is.

I believe in very strong films and I don't apologize to them one bit, as long as there is a balance in the thing.

[French] I like the film very much and I haven't seen the television series.

LYNCH: Fantastic. I will have a lunch with you later on. [Laughter.]

[French] Questions to the scriptwriter and to Mr David Lynch. What influence did working with familiar characters have on the writing, the scoring and the directing?

LYNCH: Writing for a film is opposed to writing for a television series. I feel that much difference. You're obviously not restricted by an hour and 14 pages to an act. But other than that, it was the same people and you have more time and can be more intense about these people.

LYNCH: Naturally speaking, it might be a little broader and just a little larger than the approach on the television series. But very similar to the characters and the style.

LYNCH: What was the question?

[The question is repeated.]

LYNCH: It didn't affect it so very much at all. There are obviously some things we couldn't do on television that we did in the film, but I was always around a few inches from the approach on television. As well, we were shooting the whole series on film, editing it on film and making it just like on film, so the differences were not so great.

Mr Lynch, given [your responses to] some of the other questions this morning, and from talking to you in the past and at other press conferences on other films, I know that when people make issues about the symbolism that we think we see in your films you like to let things slide. You have given answers and you're very clever. A couple of examples of that this morning were when the Australian gentleman was asking about whether this was the American nightmare versus the American dream. I personally have great discomfort at the end of the film because of what I see as a sort of postmodern, religious, right-wing attitude to the end of the story. Now, I may be making this up in my own mind. The point is that I feel that we are not allowed to ask you these questions because we won't get answers. And I am wondering if it is because you won't talk about it or you don't want to talk about it?

LYNCH: I don't like to give my interpretations because... um, um... because if you're required, you'd have to make up your own interpretation of what you see on the screen. And, uh, I have my own version of everything, and when I'm working I immerse them myself. But when it comes you must live and often as soon and everyone is allowed to enjoy their own interpretation. And I'm against a lot of films that would make absolutely no sense—none available.

I think it is fair to say that everyone is in love with *True Peaks* [the series] except a few select folks who have Nielsen boxes in their homes back home. What can we expect for the future of *True Peaks* on television and could you also give us a brief description as what is happening with "Ronnie Roeder" and "One Silver Bubble"?

LYNCH: I can tell you probably for sure that *True Peaks* on television is gone. But, like I said earlier on, I love this world. The jury is out on whether or not we will ever be able to go on there again. But for me there are still open roads and then, and I'd be excited to say and find out what could be going on.

Now, what was the initial question?



What is happening with "Ronnie Roeder" and "One Silver Bubble"?

LYNCH: I'm not going to do "Ronnie Roeder", or at least I'm not going to do it right away. I think I may be doing "One Silver Bubble" but I'm not sure. I'm not sure about the future of that. "One Silver Bubble" is a very simple, informal, but however kind of film.

I would like to hear the actual voice of Mr Anderson. I was also wondering if you could explain the shooting of the dream sequence. The atmosphere of this dream is amazing.

LYNCH: Well, here's my actual voice. [Laughter.]

What was the second part about? Do you mean technically? We had someone reading the lines offstage (frantically) and I would translate them backwards and we would film that backwards. Then, when we showed it forward two negatives made a positive.

[Anderson then gives example of speaking backwards: Chern.]

[French] Mr Lynch, by reading, re-reading, translating from series that positive made, is it either a lack of inspiration or you wanted some kind of statement?

LYNCH: Well, I think that there are most things in there which, in my opinion, are fairly original and, as I said before, I love the characters and the world. When we started writing this thing, we didn't think of it as a rehashing some old thing. We thought about going back into a certain world we love and enjoying a story there. It was, for me, an incredible place to be.



David Lynch

Mr. Baskin: Well, do you think you embrace the tradition of *Memento*?

BALABAN: That's quite a compliment.

MR. BASKIN: Are you going to make *Memento* a year?

BALABAN: No, I'm not that efficient. I like doing maybe three film scores a year and some television and Broadway. I try to park my properties very carefully.

MR. BASKIN: A great, scholarly

[Unintelligible question, which begins "Mr. Lynch, since violence is a B1 crime, what have you learned from movie-makers..."]

[Lynch looks at Henry Belser.]

MR. BASKIN: Don't think to me! [Laughs.]

MR. BASKIN: What was that question once again?

MR. BASKIN: The movie *Memento* is a B1 crime, so what have you learned from this movie for your own B1 crime...?

MR. BASKIN: I'm sorry, I can't help you with the answer. [Laughs.]

MR. BASKIN: Another question: How do you choose actors you work with?

MR. BASKIN: Well, when you have a part you picture a certain way and you enter into a casting session with the idea of finding that person who will fill that role. And, little by little by little, the actors are needed out and the right person is right in front of you and says you go.

I don't read people to make them perform anything. I just talk to them. I like work with a person called Johnama Ray who brings me in very good people. It's just someone sense of the right person for each role.

I am trying to write a thesis about your work and in your movies, except for *Twin Peaks* [1], the mother is always on [1] the dark side and in *Twin Peaks* it is the father. But because he has to draw some sexual relations with Laura or what?

MR. BASKIN: Again, I'll get into it with you some other way.

MR. BASKIN: Which character in *Twin Peaks* is closest to you?

MR. BASKIN: Ah, I don't know — Gordon Cole [whom Lynch plays in the film].

I don't think you're dead [like Gordon Cole].

MR. BASKIN: No, but sometimes, like this gentleman and back here, I pretend I'm dead.

I have another question, about the

score. There is a special part in *Twin Peaks* [the sex scene] which is like a part in *Wild at Heart* [the porno movie]. Is it the same?

MR. BASKIN: No.

MR. BASKIN: The guitar?

MR. BASKIN: No.

MR. BASKIN: How do you score a sex scene. Mr. Baskin?

MR. BASKIN: With great respect. [Laughs.] I think we just capture the mood of the scene and let the music flow with it.

MR. BASKIN: I have two questions. The first is that violent films are becoming more and more a normal thing in Hollywood. I would like to know how you feel about violence, especially in your films where the violence is mostly very explicit and particularly in *Twin Peaks*, I think, because it is shown in a very explicit way.

MR. BASKIN: Well, I don't know why there is violence in American films it's probably because there is a lot of violence everywhere in the air. And I think that when people get scared they pick up on whatever is around them and the story starts unfolding in your mind.

Like I said before, I believe in balance. I believe in violence but I don't want to champion violence. I believe that a film should have contrasts and I believe that a film is a place where you can go and have an experience, like reading a book.

But do you find it is a way violence? If you followed the television series, you know what happened to Laura Palmer and all you are waiting for in the film is the murder. That is basically the storyline where she is going to die.

MR. BASKIN: And a lot of bad things along the way, too. But you do know that she is probably going to die, yes.

DAVID LYNCH, DIRECTOR OF *TWIN PEAKS*, AND LAURA PALMER, WHO PLAYS HER.



MR. BASKIN: My other question is: Do you feel inspired by the American film noir genre from the 1940s and 1950s and the exploitation films of the 1960s and 1970s? I find a lot of your work comes from that. Is that true?

MR. BASKIN: I don't know. I do believe in a certain sense in B films.

MR. BASKIN: Mr. Lynch, what do you love in the world of *Twin Peaks*?

MR. BASKIN: I love the mood and the characters. I love the possibilities for scores. There's a magical thing that can take place in my mind in that world. It's inspiring to me.

MR. BASKIN: Mr. Lynch, is there an intention of parody in the way the sound effects are used?

MR. BASKIN: Ah, no.

I heard this question asked in Berlin of Mr. Baskin. I would also like your opinion, Mr. Lynch. What do you have more pleasant shooting: horror scenes or suspense scenes?

MR. BASKIN: I like to shoot all different kind of scenes and that's part of the thing, the tension and the mood. Almost any kind of scene I just love to film in there and try to make it as real as possible. I wouldn't choose one particular type of scene over something else. I like pretty much everything.

I would like to follow on from an earlier question about Mr. Lynch saying that he loves the world. If that is true, why do most of the characters have such miserable and fucked-up lives?

MR. BASKIN: I think there are opportunities for strange exchanges and interesting human interactions in the world. I would have to sit down maybe with a psychiatrist for a long time to tell you exactly why I like it, but I really do like it.

MR. BASKIN: Mr. Lynch, when you decided to do a long film on Laura Palmer, was it because you felt you owed the actress for having spent the entire series as a corpse?

MR. BASKIN: No. Sherry Lee, who plays Laura Palmer, was hired to be a dead girl lying [sic] on a beach [actually you never heard her]. It turns out, at least in my opinion, she's an unbelievable actress and there are things about her talent in this movie that are truly incredible. I haven't seen too many people get into a role and give it so much. So, the big news for me was this person hired to be a dead girl turns out to be a great actress and a perfect Laura Palmer.

MR. BASKIN: I know obviously you are a

"I'm not a real film buff. Unfortunately, I don't have time.

[...] I become very nervous when I go to a film because I worry so much about the director and it is hard for me to digest my popcorn."

DAVID LYON

very busy man, but I was wondering if you took time out to see films. What sort of films have you seen lately and have you seen any sort of influence on those films that you consider has possibly come from your films?

LYONS: I'm not a real film buff. Unfortunately, I don't have time. I just don't go. And I become very nervous when I go to a film because I worry so much about the director and it is hard for me to digest my popcorn. [Laughter]

So I can't tell you if anyone has been influenced by me.

Mr Lyons and Robert English, late twentieth-century literary critics that not only are we able to read the written word but also read the screen. We are introduced with screen images and I was wondering if both of you are fundamentally of that first when you both write and direct?

LYONS: I'm not sure what you're asking.

Today we are much more image literate than before. There is much more study of film going on. You can happily say that you are going to sit and read a film now without people going, "What's wrong with you?" And you make particularly dense projects. You cannot there understand a David Lyons film I'm wondering if you come to it from the other end, thinking about the whole post/textualist?

LYONS: There is a language of film which I have always used but more engaged with. It's this formalist which has been hanging this idea of cinema alive for 40 years and that is why it's the best film festival in the world because it gets the language of film and celebrates it.

We heard that the film will be released from Japan. Did the success of the television series in Japan put...?

LYONS: I think Jean-Claude [Pinault] would have to answer that. I know the series is extremely popular in Japan, but it is in other places as well. I don't know why they got it first.

Another question: Why did you decide to shoot the story of Laura Palmer? Do you think that with the shooting of this story as a film it will be to a certain extent discuss the mystery that was raised around the world during your novel?

LYONS: I don't think so, no.

[Helen Mirren then asks Pinault in French why the film will open first in Japan. Pinault replies in French that it just happened that circumstances were suitable.]



TRAILER (LEFT) HARRISON CARR (MIDDLE) JERRY BRAN (RIGHT) WITH JACQUELINE BAKER, PETER DINKlage, AND MARY MCGEE

Mr Lyons, I have read that Kyle MacLachlan was really afraid to say the lines known by, and only famous for, this character Dale Cooper and that he was not very enthusiastic about playing the movie. Is that true? And another question: Are you afraid to face some lines as the Yoda Pasha master in the future?

LYONS: It is very tough for an actor, I think, to find a role that everyone loves them in and they want to break out and show they can do other things. I think that Kyle is finally realizing that he can do anything else he wants and that people love him as Dale Cooper so much he probably will be very happy about that.

He's very beginning, he was scared of doing the series, because we'd done 50 hours and he didn't know if he wanted to go in and do it again. But then finally he decided that he would and off he went. He didn't want to do *Star Trek*, either. He wanted it done, then thought about it and changed. He read a couple of times.

It is a very tough thing to make a decision to lay low something for a year and have to go on the screen and all that. So, he had to think about it some.

[Pinault] We put out a record judgment, many would probably define you as a very perverse director. Would you agree?

LYONS: I think perverse things are interesting and non-perverse things are boring. I like controversy. I like [like] perversion and non-perversion both things.

Let's say you're the campaign strategy for the Democratic or Republican party. You take the night off and go and see the movie. Would you come out of there thinking this was good for your campaign or bad, which may be another way of asking: how you think Americans will see the film in terms of the political and social climate?

LYONS: Just as you see from the press conference, there have been many different interpretations and feelings about anything we see these days. You can't please all the people and worry one of those Democrats going to see the picture would come out with a different feeling, most likely. It's the same all the world over.

Mr Lyons, I'm interested in the use of deadpan humor in your work. There seems to be more of it in the series than in the movie. In the series, you encourage a complexity with the main story; they feel like they are in on something. This is part of why it was so popular for why do you have a lot of it in the movie? And why is it that you are one of the few directors who wants everyone to have a separate opinion about your work?

LYONS: It isn't often anyone must have a completely separate one, but they have to have their own opinion.

There is less humor in the film because the movie is a more serious whole. Humor has a place in a picture, but you have to know not of suddenly where that place is and where it isn't. But Bob and I were laughing while we were writing many times, as serious places.

LYONS: It goes back to the story, I think. You pick out the story you are trying to tell. It's the most with characters that are in the series that aren't in the movie. We chose to tell the story and that's how it comes out.

LYONS: I think humor is like electricity. You work with it but you don't understand how it works. It is an enigma.

David Lyons, could you tell me the purpose of the dream sequences in the film and in the series?

LYONS: No, no. [Laughter]

It is an integral part of the film. Why did you feel you wanted to use some of [the] reality?

LYONS: [Long pause.] Well, for me, and I think for pretty much everybody that's ever been, there is a feeling that there might be something like subatomic particles moving that we can't see and steps and maybe a few other things out there and that a little opening could exist and we could go somewhere else. And this kind of idea captivates me.

LYONS: Ladies and gentlemen: thank you very much.

LYONS: Thank you very much.

[Applause. Conference ends.]

Literature-Film connection

THREE FILMS REVIEWED

Orson Welles once said, "I believe you must say something new about a book, otherwise it is best not to touch it." The dispiriting talk, at almost every level, about "faithful" adaptations of literature into film suggests that Welles' view is not widely shared.

Again and again one hears a film praised for capturing the "spirit" or "essence" of the novel or play concerned, rarely does one hear of a film's being cheered for its inventiveness in approaching a work of literature. Such approbation is more likely to be regarded as violations of varying degrees of canonicity. This issue reviews which "faces" (given in the order in which the films were seen) of the genre venture (or suggest) a wide spectrum of literature-film dealings. Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho* is based on Shakespeare in the intervals of telling a story of distressed and modern contemporary youth James Hey's elegant Haroldo that slavishly imitates B. M. Foster from page to screen, with a cameo, the maturest directorial intervention Richard Linklater's *Slacker*, James's gay police veteraned Marlowe's really catch play.

All three of these films have their considerable virtues, but if the first and third seem infinitely more exciting as films it is perhaps because they appear to have caught (in Welles words) to "say something new" about the original text. It is possible for a film adaptation to retain the key narrative events of its predecessor yet to retain their "new" work. In the case of the novel or play — those strategies by which the narrative events are related, displayed, controlled — that much "newness" is likely to be achieved. It is on this level that Van Sant and Linklater have dared to lead whereas Foster has been content to follow.

Writing of *Forbidden Planet*, the 1956 science-fiction adventure derived from *The Tempest*, Pauline Kael wrote: "This picture has... [didn't] lift some of Shakespeare's dialogue." Well, Gus Van Sant has done exactly that in *My Own Private Idaho*: his beautiful melancholy re-telling of some of Shakespeare's scenes from *Henry IV Part 1* and *Part 2* and the result is to deepen considerably the resonance of that film.

It is not that *My Own Private Idaho* is an adaptation of Shakespeare's history plays. Rather it belongs with those other great which seem to take Shakespeare to a starting point — film such as Joseph Losey's *A House of Strings* (1948),

remade as a thriller, Edward Dmytryk's *Broken Lizard* (1944), both drawing on Reginald Kipling's representation of autistic fathers in difficult relations with their three children, David Lean's 1945 is working of *Charles and Mary Anne* in the world of London, and from *The Tempest* again Peter Greenaway's 1981 film, *Prospero's Book* and possibly William Wellman's 1944 *Wuthering*. *My Own*

The affinities of each with the precursor (class) vary considerably but none could be described as an adaptation in the strict sense of the word. What they offer, in their diverse modes and to different degrees, is a kind of commentary or reflection upon the relevant play. They have recognized some essence of the original which is adaptable to their purposes, and sometimes, as in *My Own Private Idaho*, they can shed one into a productive re-thinking of the play in question.

It is not possible to enjoy — to respond to — *My Own Private Idaho* without knowing that it is *Henry IV* plays (it also draws briefly on Petrarch's death from *Henry IV*). However, it will almost certainly be a richer experience for those who know the plays and perhaps a little puzzling to those who don't. This is partly because it like whole stretches of Shakespearean dialogue with only slight accommodation to late twentieth-century idiom. The effect is, not one of jarring incoherence but of reaching across continents and centuries to help the continuity of human discourse. Warmth and tenderness are as likely to be identified to experience in 1600s Oregon as in the court of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.

Narratives do not happen in a vacuum. They are always relating other stories, and there is to reason why a film (or play or novel) should not require its viewers to know something more than just what is set before them. Tom Stoppard's *Travels with Myself* is based on a background that includes James Joyce and *The Importance of Being Earnest* and without knowing *Hamlet* counts not *Julius Caesar* are *David* means to anyone ignorant of *Hamlet*. Something certainly about small lives caught between "mighty opposed" by it provides a reason to those who can also see it as a critique of another work which is part of our cultural baggage.

The intentionality of *My Own Private Idaho* includes not only Shakespeare but Oscar Wilde's *Deceitful Mischief* which brought its own changes on the "Henry" plays as it is to extend and foreground the story of Petrarch. Indeed, as he created some of cinema's lasting images of the modern city of Los Angeles as embodied in the growth of the dampest Prince Hal as he moves towards his acceptance to the library in *Henry IV* and the inevitable rejection of Falstaff. Before the film ends,

Actions

Had Ross lost to death both his actual father—the out-of-control, manipulative King—and his surrogate father (Patricio)? Having been an unsatisfactory son to the former, he ends by disregarding the latter who can have no place in his new life. This is the major narrative (in which Van Sant has borrowed some *Black Panther* and *Boyz n the City*). *My Own Private Idaho* is very much a film about young men in search of freedom. *Score: 4*

It is a step-a-film about the search for home – an immigrant in the class of what a good home might be and how it shapes the (over)cast mind. (For Soho [cinema reviewer], though young he has the *Myria* of Purland, Oregon. Home is on the one hand a lovingly appointed mansion in which the sophisticated (and questioning) parents (played) have already contained violence. On the other hand, home has been destroyed in which separate the crowd functions presented over by the socially flawed figure, Bob (William Richert), and a Mission. On only equivalent (della) Street Lightworks (and vigorously played by Jeff Gurnick). Scott is asked to come to report to his father and (and) time, argues the Mayor who calls her a "degenerate". "Don't say that either. You're a little thing, and you're a little thing."

At the point, I should make clear that I have another non-kinship-based strand to the narrative. Scott is living and fellow traveler Miles (John Phoenix) in some respects fills the role of Prince Hal's loyal Paine in Henry V's Part 3, a bit more so suggests the plot to kill Falstaff and his soldiers after they have subdued some pilgrims, with the sense of relishing the "monstrous feast" Falstaff will have laid in. My Dean Paine takes the last pilgrim on a cynical three-quarter mile journey and his last of this point offers a close reading of the Shakespearean text. "Do you think I would let the boy appear?" asks Scott/Falstaff but follows it with "Do you think I could let him see Scott?" says

Our only caveat out of here¹² That is, it specifies but much more explicitly the opportunistic expectations of the Faustian figure alike. However, has other failures to fulfill his narrative and some may feel that the film weakness is that it doesn't quite transcend his basic character.

For Mike, life as a young gay man is not just a matter of being either brave or closeted after the manner that Scott claims it is for him. Scott insists that "it's just a matter of how much" that "it will be my life, whereas you don't do anything to live 'till trouble follows. Mike, though, says "I could love someone if I wanted to get it" and indeed does so. Scott: "There is real happiness in what amounts to their love scene as they camp by the side of an island (and Scott is actually in the shower, the show is out for Harvey's head), upper-class 'farm-out' estate, but he does seem to have real affection for Mike. And it is Mike, a shy, quiet person, who says:

Before a sarcoplasmic \rightarrow did every method giving a full view of the word is the first image of the film and the second image is a strike is a sarcoplasmic \rightarrow being lifted from an injured road into a car by a police? Smith? Arson? In particular?

And the film ends on this enigmatic note in relation to Mike: "Little Scotty, Mike's little son, is problematic at best. Within the neuroticology of his life, he has, typically, beautiful but bewildering dreams of his mother and of a shadowy female figure in a doorway. He finds with his father in his house a nightmare that he will never know. The stress, a makeshift plastic tent on a borrowed apartment rooftop, the rundown hotel, these are where the attempt, but he is haunted by desire as much as by fear. One anxiety is not yet a road or path; this desire is beyond saying. "I just know I've been here before... It's like someone's face. Like a fucked-up face." At the film's end there is a similar image of this road and Mike's "vision" returns. "Yes, a consciousness."

[illegible]

each. "The camera pulls up and back to reveal him lying there. A truck stops, two men get out to help him. 'Amance the Beautiful' is based on the soundtrack (then a car comes by and he is killed inside) and the final image is a time-lapse shot of this city growing behind the frame house."

Mike's uncertain history (his father was fired and he is part of the street scene that Scott has played with "This town damn well Scott will not only meet, [but] I may see a time when I needed to learn from you... but don't come near me now") but when he will also find Mike is looking both openly and casually. Scott's two waxes stand in the doorway while he rather indulged with formal covering the first line. twenty waxes for the other call out before.

The problem is that, structurally, *Shattered* seems to maintain that it essentially tells a story informed by issues of narrative interpretation. It is Scott's story, which holds the attention most closely. Yet Scott has not seemed to be told the whole film in terms of *Shakespeare*—but the fact is that the *Shakespearean* actors are structurally adequate, unless they become merely reactive like as they do Scott. His story loses some of its grip. He targets and finds the film, the remaining images of destroyed and houses that haunt the film belong to him, another pursuit of his mystery and (perhaps) his life (Bosch does not guarantee direction) is understandable, but not even his relationship with Scott is enough to keep him at the center of the film with Scott. There is no mystery, nothing as riveting in Miles' situation as Bosch's mystery of Bob. Scott's temporary abandonment of him is fully ("I'm going to take a little time off. Maybe I'll see this place over the road") written structurally as anticipation of his dismissal of Bob.

Interview: This is a fascinating and fully conventional film and perhaps it would be less interesting if it were. Its approach is thoroughly other (but structural) to Shakespearean England, the nature



of brotherhood and "human warmth" must give way to the constraints of "good government" in America in the 1980s. The beauty of "spacious plain and urban meadows of green" is usually celebrated, and the accompanying losses ironically assumed as the urban is dreamed plangently on the national level. Political conferences on a vast scale has replaced smaller conferences.

Few films are as puzzling and as wailing—as headless of mainstream commercialities, as unbalanced toward sex in top-billed film as a major race director with more than a touch of the poet, more interested in truth than reality. He invests (and pays his dues to) both Shakespeare and Velázquez and incidentally establishes a variety of other notions from the Pilgrimage of Our Lady Wilcocks Cruise, but in the end our hero made something new, something it with the legend of a director and is a movie on its own, good.

It also contains the most famous sentence from *El Financiero's* *Homeland* brief—"Only gays!"—and should be omitted from the film. Just because it is (part of) the recently discovered piece is no reason to give the famous remark about HIV infection a Fifth Symphony and that is simply going to an unbelieved general case to say: My God is that the film about HIV and *Homeland* (both in regards to its authenticity and "truth") not to say homophobic and universalist insinuation to its producer that it comes as a shock to find that anything so famous is untrue.

It's his old job at Blinding (1984) Pankaj, James Ivory often refers when amounts to a scrupulous regard for the use of the novel, highlighting virtually no point of interest. It is an adaptation at the other end of the spectrum, it is literally like a novel, from such exciting cinematic innovations with literary sources as *Prospero's Books* or *My Own Private Idaho*. It is very little that it has with Ivory's *A Room With a View* is his way of taking the novel and applying it to the film. The highly stylized approach, as appeared to grasping the novel by the neck of the horse and shaking new life into it. It is that inventive idea and incidental relation rather than the creation of a coherent new work.

Superficially, it looks as if Twyla's film is after a newconference. It begins with title Flash Wilson (Gianluca Nardelli) walking maniacally round the back garden of Riverside End while a noly game is being played inside. There is, implicitly, a link-of connection between the cat-batting/impulsive art he solitary women and the new art of the female.

The film ends with Margaret Schlegel (Emma Thompson), in defiance of her friends who will not let her mother off the house (including her own with her sister Helen (Helena Bonham Carter) and her sister-in-law Rose) seen by the unhappy sister Leonard (Alan Rickman) himself, struggling with the effects of his dying widow, has ended her life during the life of unconditional love to one of her comrades in the moment of both death and destruction. *Intimacy*

has married Ruth's widower (Anthony Hopkins), thus bringing about a union of two ways of thinking ways of being. Hailu's child represents a union, a reconciliation. Not that I believe any more than the novel seems perfectly sure what form to adopt towards the Republic. I speak with few expectations, to culture and the "communist" wife. From this point of view, the ending is more subterranean than organic.

—Lee Auer

Nevertheless, the idea of "only content" is perhaps borne out by the reshaping of the results in the extent of selecting lists. Wilcox's strongly pre-accepted walk in the opening sequence in the garden, to foreground the closing sequence in which nature and human nature are seen to be one. This idea is articulated too in the frequent use of images of progress being sent, of those journeys of letters written and received, all imply the effort towards some objective. Much is seen out by life with the birds, Jacques Wilcox, but in the end Margaret, the second-class Wilcox brings home and the split of individual comprehension in the cooperation of two worlds.

In *Between the Men* offers "Spenser, Book: Howards End" some realistic wit and a profound and feeling. This is particularly true of the scenes between Ruth and Margaret. In their first meeting there is a very clear sense of the opposition of Margaret's healthy vitality and the older woman's weary quality, as they discuss the idea of rubber aprons. Ruth can't see an alternative to the old and is hence being pulled down. The flow of sympathy between the two women in this scene is backward, as for "Spenser" literary knowledge

It is easy to see what attracts the *Manchurian-Japanese* team to Foster's novels. It is not surprising that David Levin took them to the cinema with *A Passage to India*; the Foster one might have suggested itself into the exact context, appeal to the team. Throughout their careers, whether in the interval films such as *Autumn of a Patriot* or *Reflections Over Georgia* or *Florida's Plethora* in *Practical Comedy* or the *Harvey James* adaptations, *The Europeans* and *The Americans*, or that very far afield, *Blue Autumn* in *Manhattan*, they are fascinated by the state of inequality, different ways of contrast, representation. It may take the form of Indian solidarity, not treated by caricature Europeans, it may be Dutch mixed Americans referring to their film in English words, it may be traditional means looked in reality with the sword gentle, as in *Reverend Bird*, it may be the clash of those who justify economic Britain as a being part of "the battle of life" and those who're dressed in clashing "feminine sensibilities." *Manchurian* and *Japanese* have persistently shown themselves available to documenting the two sides of such representations. And, however, first or perhaps more, mostly this is in their earlier films. They work towards a broader sense of reconciliation.

[illegible]

Every 1 minute for the past decade has taken a devastating toll on the literary world, none since the time of the Holocaust (1939). (Sometimes the beauty of the images is almost only justified as in the Spanish trucking photo that evokes a learned reminder of night some beautiful woods at night some time it seems merely to swallow in the emotional resonance of Holocaust

[illegible]

There is their central theme: Men (or rather the Florida strip-teasers) alone. A Room With A View and Maurice are exemplified by graceful new artwork and a hybrid series of vibrant composition. They are also marked by the presence of polished acting often reflecting his theatrical affiliations of the past. In the present time I have an outstanding performance from Vanessa Paradiso (the most eloquent film-working actress) and Emma Thompson, and right at close the list, and so smaller: When John is frozen away by Dennis Diner (last July).



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what stage of infection. But he also has a right to ask: "We never discuss it. Howard [Brody] stays close, silently, by way of apology."

What such episodes and films are plenty of them, suggests the detailed commentary of the BBC classic series. So here is briefest of the first version of a movie-length book, run to 142 minutes. To be fair, the text's story gives more material to explore than enough for the film to be as engaging, though there are moments of lingering as it comes – unfortunately – to the issues of the English countryside.



continued on p. 10

ortman is a futuristic thriller directed by Gordon. A Village Roadshow Production, it was Warner's Roadshow Production late last year.

The River is not in jeopardy, while no one intent on listed growth is out of court. A new law in Florida may give birth to Captain Agate House. Fortunately, we live in a local government.

For those who're not big fans of the *Forty*, not to worry: national Men-Tel Club and thirty others in *Forty* is a high-tech prison where each cell is enclosed in two layers and where computers take control of systems and even food and water dispensers.

To its owners, the Port of New York and New Jersey, the Port Authority is a public trust. It is a trust that is held in common by the people of New York and New Jersey, and it is a trust that is held in common by the people of the United States.



PRODUCER
JOHN FLOCK

Interviews by Daniel Gagnon



JOHN FLOCK
Interviewed by
Michael Coppinger

Ford

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mess

Fortress

Your producing partner on this project, John Davis, has a multi-title picture deal with Twentieth Century Fox. What is Davis' background and how did you two team up?

John's father is Marvin Davis, who used to own Fox. John used to be an executive there.

After his father sold the studios, John stayed on and had a production deal there. He produced a couple of films with Joel Silver, Predator (John McTiernan, 1987) and Predator 2 (Stephen Hopkins, 1990), and a couple with Larry Gordon. He also did a few films on his own.

John and I met about four years ago when I was working with a company called Film Accord. We put together a project starring Gena Rowlands called *Slaves* (William Peterson, 1991). It was originally going to be distributed by Fox, but ended up being MGM/UA's.

John brought John's project called *Seppuku* (Mark Frost, 1992), which we did together with distribution through Fox*, and he brought me *Fortress*—something that he had worked on there.

In a useful release for *Fortress* you say, "I had a long relationship with Village Roadshow and I thought that *Fortress* would be a perfect vehicle for them and their studio in Australia." What had you done in Australia prior to *Fortress*?

I helped Director a mini-series called *A Dangerous Life* (Dick Markowski, 1988). It was done with HBO in the U.S. and with McClary & McIlroy, the production company, in Australia. That is where Dick became familiar with how the movie business worked down here.

Village and I also worked together on the financing of *Tank Beach* (Stephen Wallace, 1992), which is how I got into business with the Village Roadshow group.

So you've been in and out of Australia for some years now?

I spent quite a bit of time in Australia about four years ago, but I hadn't been here in two years. I've been working with Village Roadshow out of its Los Angeles office.

Whom did you do the deal with at Village Roadshow?

I'd worked very closely with Greg Coats, who is president of Village Roadshow Pictures, which is the production subsidiary for the Village Roadshow group of companies. I've been working out of Greg's office in Los Angeles for the last year and a half on a variety of projects, with them and without them.

When John saw me *Fortress*, we realized it was a very contained production. It didn't require a lot of exterior locations. It was something that was designed to be shot at a movie studio. I knew about the Moore World Facility through Greg and thought it would



* The film was produced in the U.S. by Australian David Roe and was originally based on a novel by Jack Galt called *Keyhole*. John Davis and John Frost were executive producers.



THE LEFT: DIRECTOR STEVEN GARDON, CENTER: LAMBERT AS CONAN, RIGHT: CHRISTOPHER LAMBERT DURING THE SHOOTING OF *CONAN*. LAMBERT AS *CONAN*, ABOVE: LAMBERT DURING THE SHOOTING OF *CONAN*, BOTTOM: THE LAMBERTS AND LAMBERT AS *CONAN*

just be perfect. You've seen the cell block; it's a massive set. Stage Five was big enough to do it.

As well, Australia has the kind of technicians that you really don't have outside the U.S. They have done a magnificent job. We knew that they could create the *Conan* set because Warrens had the physical plans to do it and Australia had the people capable of executing the plans.

How would you compare studio facilities in the U.S. with what you found here in Australia?

I haven't worked at any Australian studio other than this one. But my understanding is that the facilities in Sydney and Melbourne are older and not really designed for motion pictures. They're warehouses that have been converted to motion picture use.

This one was built by Dino De Laurentiis as a movie studio. The location may not have been ideal at the time, but there's got to be a reason for building it there. And it's starting to come true for *Village* and *Warner*, which own most of it; it's been properly designed. They've even got a tank here that they can utilize.

Stage Five is not a huge warehouse, but a sound stage that's properly rigged. It has all the equipment, either in there or immediately available. It is a world-class facility.

Conan will be sold worldwide by IAC Film Sales. Who is IAC?

IAC is a sales agency owned by Guy Collins. Guy handled *Highlander* [Russell Mulcahy, 1986] and *Highlander II: The Return* [Mulcahy, 1991], with Christopher Lambert. Guy seems to be the Christopher Lambert expert in the international marketplace.

Guy works in our agent's old building, Christopher is the lead. John and I are producing it. Susan Gordon will direct it. *Village* will be the production entity. We talked at the Warner offices. The budget is approximately \$14 million, Australian. Here's this beautiful poster that we've created for the movie. What do you think we can get for it?

Guy then went to Carver, as he's done this for me on other pictures. He came back and said what he thought we were going to get for it, and we closed the deal. He delivered the contract, and I went out and banked it.

So the strategy was first to choose a major movie star, like Christopher Lambert, who had influence and exposure outside of the U.S., in Europe and throughout the world?

Absolutely. This is an independent film production. Fox was American distribution, but they're not financing the production of the film. And when you're an independent producer, by and large, unless you're extremely well capitalized, and there are fewer and fewer of those, you finance



2 The actor's name is Christopher Lambert, though English-language versions of his film usually opt for the name "Y".



JAMES VANDERBEEK, WITH STUART GORDON, AND DAVID TROTT (NOT VISIBLE) IN *BEASTS* ON SCREEN

film by pre-selling them. And in order to pre-sell them in the current marketplace you have to have someone who is a "star." And there's a very shallow group of those. It may run fairly deep in terms of male stars who'll enable you to finance your picture. Some of them are obvious names, some less so, but there are not a lot of them. Christopher happens to fall into that category.

Apart from Christopher Lambert, the film also stars Kirkwood Smith, whose credits include *RoboCop*, *Rambo 3* and *Dead Poet Society*.

We cast Christopher first, because in these sorts of pictures your lead actor is what enables you to raise the financing. With Christopher and Stuart Gordon set, we then went out and started looking to fill the secondary roles, like Karen Brownach, who's played by Lynn Locklin. We were also looking for an archetype villain and Rich plays these roles a lot. He's a terrible character. I don't know if you've seen him in other projects, but he is a very good bad guy. It was as if he was designed for this role.

How did director Stuart Gordon come to your attention?

Stuart has had an interesting reputation in the business since *Re-Animator* (1985), which received enormous critical acclaim for a film that was made on an absolute shoestring budget.

Stuart's been making up his own little movie companies for a couple of years, all of which have been extremely close given virtually no money was available to make them. Stuart did a very good job of making them work within the marketplace that they were intended for.

A lot of people in the industry think that Stuart has the potential to break into mainstream action-adventure, which is

how he got involved with Disney on *Money, Money, Money*. The film, which Stuart developed, had some medical problems that wouldn't allow him to go to Mexico to direct it. So Joe Johnston took over.

Stuart's really needed a project that was close to his roots. In terms of budgets and the marrying of action adventure with an R, for me will enable Stuart to sort of branch out from what he has done previously.

Apparently there have been three writers on the film: Steve Feinberg, Troy Neighbour and Terry Curtis Fox.

Troy and Steve, who are a writing team, were the original writers. We then brought in Terry, who is an experienced television writer. He worked on *Hill Street Blues* and he's worked with Stuart for years. His career is to do a dialogue patch because he was a little bit more experienced and we were on a very extreme time crunch. Terry's a guy who's used to working under television deadlines, rather than feature-type deadlines. Everyone ended up working pretty well together.

So how will the credits read on the finished product?

That is up to the Screen Writers Guild. My guess is that it will read, "Written by Troy Neighbour and Steve Feinberg and Terry Curtis Fox."

In terms of major Australian crew, your director of photography is David Egby, who did *Mad Max* (George Miller, 1979) and *Quigley* (Simon Wincer, 1991), and your production designer is David Copping. How did you select them in particular?

That is where Village Roadshow's expertise in Australia really came into play for us. Compared to the film industry in the U.S., Australia is relatively small, and everybody knows everybody else. John and I as producers are not really familiar with everybody who works here, but Village is—Greg Coote, in particular, and Michael Lake, who runs the studio facility here. It wasn't even a matter of interviewing people. We just said, "Who are the best people?" They made their recommendations and we were thrilled to deal with the people they presented to us.

You have non-Australian actors as three of your main stars. How did you negotiate that with Action Equity?

First, a little bit of background. The Australian industry is by and large subsidized by the government, either directly through the Film Finance Corporation and various local organizations like the Queensland Film Development Office, or indirectly through tax offerings like 100A or Section 30(1). A consequence of this government subsidy is that Action Equity has had a real lot to say about whom you could or could not bring into the country. There was a direct relationship between Action Equity and Australian organizations, and so this was really a consequence of the fact that the people of Australia, either directly or indirectly, were supporting the film industry, and there was a feeling that the

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"By and large, the savings here are in the range of twenty to thirty per cent below the line. Now they're offset a bit by electing to fly in a principal cast and an American director, and by not hiring locals. But filming here still means significant savings."

JOHN FLOCK

money should be going to Australians and not to Americans who want to shoot here.

We financed this film totally outside of the existing [subsidy] structure. That is an independently-financed picture with not a dime of government money in it.

Wing: Roadshow is a major distributor in this country and they're part of the action. They put up a significant amount of money; they own the Australian rights and are full partners with John Dora and I on the picture. But in terms of anything other than the pre-buying of Australian rights, which is the same as we did in Italy, France, Germany, Japan and everywhere else, *Perterra* is not subsidised at all.

Mike Lake then went to Equity for us and said, "We are producing this film here. We would like to have it certified as an Australian production, so we'll only bring in the three American actors because of a match challenge for us to work as an Equity-certified film." Equity came back to us and said, "No, you have an American producer and three non-Australian actors, so we're going to treat you as an off-shore company." That means that all of the Equity people we hired on the picture would be treated as if they were SAG [American Screen Actors Guild] members. Instead of having Equity rates apply, SAG rates would, which are significantly higher.

So, I said, "Well, okay, that's fine. But if that's the case we're not going to agree that this is an Australian production, and I can bring in as many Americans as I want, so it's not that correct?" And Equity said, "Yes it is." So we then brought in seven American actors, at which point Equity said, "We had no idea that you were going to bring in that many actors. We're going to take a second look at this." They then really gave us a hard time.

Historically, Equity has had a relationship with Immigration, which is not codified any longer. In the past, Equity had a procedure by which they could recommend whether or not a non-Australian actor can be admitted to this country under a visa to work on a film. And it's under standing that these procedures no

longer exist, and haven't for nearly a year. But the people in Immigration are acting as if they still apply. Equity contacted Immigration and said, "We haven't agreed yet to allow all these Americans into the country, don't issue them their visas." There was quite an argument between Michael Equity, because they didn't have a right to do that. They are very difficult to deal with.

So what did you do? Did you hire lawyers and go to the Immigration Department to work it out?

It didn't get quite to that point, though we threatened to.

There's a government agency in Canberra called BASSETT, which I think is the Department of Arts, Sports, Environments, Tourism and Transport. I called Canberra and spoke with a representative of BASSETT who told me that this was absolutely not the way things should operate, that they would support us if it got to the point where we had to take legal action.

But the fact of the matter was that a week before we were beginning the shoot, I had to get these people on a plane and so we ended up going to Equity and saying, "What do you want?" We had to capitulate.

That has been the only unpleasantness really in shooting the film here, and only because Equity seems to have a stronghold on the industry.

Do you think that Equity "stronghold" is a reason why few Americans and off-shore independent motion picture companies come to Australia to use our facilities, technicians, locations and actors? Do they already know they're going to face problems with Equity?

You've asked a couple of different questions. The initial question is, Why don't more American films come to Australia? Yes, I think Equity is one of the contributing factors. Another factor is that the bulk of independent films don't have a sufficient budget to warrant bringing people to Australia to work. As well, the major studios don't want to work here because they have their own facilities.

Okay, so there is a group of independent films that are less modestly budgeted, and *Perterra* would fall into that category, which can choose Australia as a location. But Equity just makes it more difficult. I wouldn't say they're a deciding factor, but they are certainly a very strong factor.

So *Perterra* was a more or less one-off situation; it wasn't because of any changes in policy by Action Equity or the Immigration Department?

No, and I'm not sufficiently experienced to reply on what Equity will do on other films. But my understanding of what happened on our film is that, because it is not a government-subsidised film in any sense, we are technically able to bring in anybody we want. But as a consequence of bringing in a significant number of American actors, Equity has charged us significantly more money than it would have cost us had we not



Fortress

brought in the American actors. I had about thirty Equity members working on this film at a far greater cost than it would have been had I not brought in all those American actors.

I also have a complete new set of residual rules that apply to those people working on this film, essentially different than what normally applies on an Equity-related picture.

And yet, you have said elsewhere that the film would have cost thirty per cent more if it had been done in the U.S. rather than Australia!

That's correct. I'm describing this problem to you with Equity not related to a \$14 million film. We're not talking about really significant amounts of money. My problems with Equity are a normal part of doing business. It's an incremental cost.

By and large the swings here are in the range of twenty to thirty per cent below the line. Now they're adding a bit by choosing to fly in a principal cast and an American director, and by not having locals. But filming here still means significant savings.

Based on this experience, would you recommend to other independent production companies in the U.S. to come to Australia?

Absolutely. The problems were insignificant in comparison to the benefits. It's just unfortunate that those problems even exist. They're a waste of time, a waste of money. But, on the balance, I'd

come back here any time.

What future phase do you have?

John and I have a picture called *The Great Gatsby*, which we're doing in Mexico this year and in which Christopher is also going to star. Then Christopher and I have a project together that we'll probably end up doing in Village Roadshow called *Mid Drive*, which I could see us doing here later than year.

So your experience with the technicians, facilities and actors here has been very satisfactory with the exception of one problem?

The short answer is yes, and I don't even want to overstate the problem with Actors Equity. It's more of an annoyance than a problem. It shouldn't deter anybody from coming here. It's just a situation that should be dealt with internally, so it's just not necessary.

There is a perception in the U.S. that Equity is a huge problem and it shouldn't be. The problem really arises because American producers want to come here and get tax benefits and then Equity says, "Gee, you can only bring in one actor." Then there's a series of "Well, Equity was 'let us in this." But of course there are strings attached when you are dealing with government money. It's just unfortunate that it spills over into a project that has a government association in it.

ACTORS EQUITY REPLIES

Anna Sutton of Actors Equity was invited to comment on various comments made by John Flock. Here is her response:

John Flock has made a number of various allegations about Actors Equity, which in the interests of informed debate should not go unmentioned. We thank Cinema Papers for the opportunity to make this reply.

For over a decade Equity has distinguished between foreign and Australian productions for the purposes of applying our imported artists policy. Naturally we have always been unwilling to continue to be much tougher on productions subsidised by the public purse. We believe that this same should not represent an 'open door' to foreign artists. We are quite happy to welcome our overseas colleagues but in respectable numbers. This is not empty rhetoric - since mid-1988, 58 foreign artists have worked in government-subsidised film and television productions.

On foreign productions we take an entirely different attitude. While understandably we are keen to reassemble employment opportunities for Australian performers, we recognise that foreign casting is a must for so-called off-shore productions. Providing a reward is reasonable, we make no objections. Our leniency in this area is a matter of public record in *Australians Way* a play, we contributed to the importation of an entire cast, we approved seven performers for *Parade* and 27 for *Mission Impossible*.

Flock alleges that Equity gave *Fortress* a 'hard time' over his request to bring in seven U.S. performers. We beg to disagree. In August 1991, we were advised that *Fortress* required three to five performers. On 26 September we were advised that the number had increased to five. Later, that number increased to seven.

On 3 October, we requested information from the production company on the reason for this incremental increase. In particular, we questioned the necessity for importing two performers who would only be appearing in the opening scenes. This information was provided to us on 10 October and the applications were cleared the next day.

Mr Flock fails to point out that applications on behalf of Marcus Lambert and Douglas were received on 1 October and cleared the next day. He also fails to point out that the five remaining artists were cleared by Equity within two days of receiving formal documentation.

Mr Flock should also recognise that both the Department of Immigration (DIODEA) and Equity cleared his applications within a

very short time frame. The ten-working-day rule that DIODEA normally requires is what? We believe that no alleged problems with Equity hindered us to do with strength and casting, rather than any leniency on our part.

Mr Flock seems to think that Equity has a 'stronghold' over DIODEA. The not insignificant number of foreign artists that have worked in Australia despite our objection suggests otherwise. Flock is no doubt aware that the Screen Actors Guild also has similar and indeed much stronger control over what *Australians* describe as 'importation of talent'.

As to Flock's alleged threat to hire lawyers, the Cinema Papers interview is the first we've heard of it.

Mr Flock's complaint in relation to Equity is not confined to imported artists. He also implies that Equity's requirement that SAG rates and residuals should apply to "outsource" his comment is of course absolutely understandable. Mr Flock is in the business of minimising budgets. We are in the business of ensuring that Australian performers receive fair wages and conditions. We do not question Australian minimums (currently \$404 per week) "paid" for off-shore features. The Australian selling community may be prepared to accept the lowest rates in the English speaking world (see *New Zealand* for domestic productions, which have historically been unable to secure the lucrative distribution deals available to U.S. films. We are not prepared to extend that subsidy to the U.S. production community.

Mr Flock is quite entitled to disagree with Equity's policy on appropriate rates. However, he is not entitled to imply that the men spring on him at the last minute. Equity's position has been clearly advertised to the Australian and international production community. We consider that foreign producers are entitled to know of our policy in advance. It is for this reason that we publish a brochure that clearly outlines our policy. This has been distributed to all major U.S. production companies. Mr Flock's representatives at our meeting of August 1991 was clearly advised that we require the SAG contract to be used on U.S. productions.

I must say that it is a pity that Equity must participate in a stingy match with a producer who incidentally we have never had the opportunity to correspond with. In alone meet. Fortunately, our relationships with the overwhelming number of producers who have worked in Australia have been excellent. But that is not so numerically as the occasional gripe.



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Noel King

"NOT TO BE AN INTELLECTUAL": ADRIAN MARTIN ON TEEN MOVIES

"Transfer[ring] criticism to not demand to analyze its own perspective [...] what is essential for the criticizer is an ability of modesty: that he doesn't consider his own perspective as the only one." JULIA KRISTEVA

In a recent review article on popular culture, Simon Frith characterized the peculiar dilemma of the popular cultural critic in the following way:

For the very act of intellectualizing (the popular is close reading of *The Cosby Show* or *Shogun* or *Monty Python*) is more away from it, a form of misreading.¹

Frith went on to conclude that the domain of popular culture, far from constituting a significant political site, more closely resembled a faraway land where

the territories are those protected onto it by (male) intellectuals themselves: intellectuals longing strongly, longing to misread, intellectuals wondering what it would be not to be an intellectual. (p. 238)

Martin's article, however admirable its desires and善良的 its proposals, still inherits a very clear dilemma of value. It is simply that in this particular dilemma what gets valued is the expression of the dilemma, the energetic, the volatile rather than something less polemical, more academic.

Frith's comments go to the heart of a lot of current writing on popular culture, especially that writing which displays an extremely self-reflexive anxiety (concerning the possibility of producing acceptable critical discourses on popular culture texts) and his remarks connect interestingly with a polemical piece published in *Cinema Papers* a couple of years ago. Adrian Martin's article on "The Teen Movie".²

In this article, Martin poses the teen pic as an occasion to launch a broadside against the current state of film criticism and film reviewing. He claimed that the teen movie poses a "problem" for film writing at all levels" (p. 108) particularly for a film analysis deriving from 1970s film theory" (p. 103) and for a film journalist considering "total misreading" before his reviewers" (p. 108). "rather westerly adult

gentle at contemporary cinema, with their often extremely middle-ground formal tastes" (p. 108). So serious Martin was concerned some of these people were "niger mortuus est" (adolescence" (p. 111) soiled and insouciantly a location it had to have invented someplace around it. The bunch of Clark Gable and old-time was incapable of dealing with "the queerness strangeness" or "Medusa intensity" (p. 103) of some teen pics. Perhaps unsurprisingly in an article on such a topic, these figures were cast as the equivalent of *El Niño* (Jeffrey Jones). Deaf of students in *Florida Summer's Day Off* that is as so many modern versions of an obscure 1940s genre: the figure of Puke and Authority who make the positive and energies of the Young and whose destiny lie to be dismantled, smothered and ultimately gelled.

Against this figure comes the figure of Martin, writing to "overcome a few resistances, and add a few scars" (p. 11) with various outdated or obsolete forms of critical discourse. Now if this is your relation then your own critical discourse will need to be quite different from those you are attacking. To some extent, Martin's is quite different but in other ways it is quite similar. On the one hand, Martin writes the way Martin Scorsese talks — and it is always exhilarating to be around that. And although (Andrew Britton aside) I have no idea of Martin's approved critical models (I have some idea of the critical models he disavows), explicit in his overall argument seems to be the notion that some forms of film criticism tend to be tedious, heavy, disabbling or a little too staid to capture the energies and volatilities of popular film. Such a view is at one with the hope that film criticism somehow could am-

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ON GAMES DATE

Adrian Martin

MON CAS

Although Noel King sometimes slips between discussing the article and my general problem as a writer, he usually sticks to addressing the specific (classic) style and argumentative strategies of "The Teen Movie: Why Bother?" I intend, in this response, to do much the same. Since I do not take King's mobilisation as a personal attack but a reasonably respectful critique, I want to use this occasion not merely to defend some of my original positions, but also to critically evaluate my own place, three years on.

I do not have the space to respond to all of King's points, as I will concentrate on three areas: "the populist", "performative" writing and intellectualism.

"The populist" (specifically, current critical approaches to the popular) is the central topic of King's remarks. One of his concerns little less as to the prevalent dream of a critical writing style which could be popular culture's inviolable companion, hopefully pulling off a "minimalist capture of some effective, even essential dimension of the popular film" (King writes a rough, preliminary stab at a paralogy of this kind of writing: *Marilyn Forever: But Little (s)*, *Rooster Warner Feathered*).

I do not have much argument with King's brief sketched sketch of the "performative" mode of writing (although, admittedly, the inclusion of a list of my most cherished critical keywords, embedded one of the appallingly insensitive analytical exercises performed on writing styles by Gayle Williamson in his 1989 booklet, *Authorship and Criticism*). I would certainly profess an intense personal predilection for this style of criticism, although I can't begin believing this to be the only viable style for paralogy. It is indeed complex, starting perhaps with *Paras* (and his colleagues), branching into the rock criticism of Lester Kinsanga and Gail Messer, developing in various ways through the work of Jonathan Rosenbaum, *The Village Voice* contributors (J. Holloman, David Karger, Amy Taubin), Richard Corson, David Thomson and post-*Paras*ians like Richard Schickel, Greg Ford and Nick Thompson, with Raymond Carver in Britain since the 1980s pursuing a quite different but importantly overlapping path.

What I take issue with in King's account of this style is the reading of it to an exclusive commitment to popular film. After all, *Paras*' greatest gift to the history of criticism (aside passed through *Artforum* as well as high class journals and film magazines) was the exemplary application of his "funky" style to avant-garde cinema (Gloss, *Werkel*, *French New Wave* (Glossed) and the mounting experimental narrative processes of the 70s (Jones, *Autism*, *Paras*), at the same time as he kept writing (often occasionally either than in popular celebration) about Hollywood film. This is a critical strategy continued by virtually all the writers cited above, and I'm happy to be with them.

The obsession of writers to align the narrative with "the popular" is a relatively recent critical development — one of the markers of the 1980s. In fact, *The Edinburgh Festival bookies* on Nigel Cunniff and Samuel Fuller illustrate the early 70s (for example, make no self-aggrandising popular claims, while the classic 1970s anthology *Kings of the 60s* drew the standard criticism (voiced by Rosenbaum among others) that it was simply not productive to polemically play-off a brand of "popular" cinema (in this case, exploitation movies) against either "highly" intelligent or the "funky" avant-garde.

The aforementioned populist moment in film criticism — the attitude that so-called "popular" film is the only author-

ity worth devoting attention to — is borne out by new writers who entered the field in

I have no wish to take my "range of education, reading and research", nor do I wish to limit anyone's freedom ... to express some of "limitless enthusiasm" without further in-depth analysis ... I think King is making too much of the potential collision between a certain anti-intellectual attitude and a particular style of writing.

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realize the tacit (or implicit) the transcendental the ideological the visceral it does not achieve an abstract metaphysical status; it is a privileged object of attention, but involves mobile orders of sense, taste and desire. (p. 12)

Popular culture is not for 'contemplation' but rather it is to be approached by way of Walter Benjamin's notion of 'distorted perception' (p. 12). Rather than cast a 'contemplative stare' which adopts 'the authority of the academic mind that seeks to register an experience that is safely personal' (p. 12), Chambers calls for 'an informal knowledge of the everyday, based on the identity of the immediate, the plausible, the concrete' (p. 12).

Nevertheless, Morris has indicated the chronic textual trope: several critical initiatives and emerging self-reflexivity attaching to projects that conceive of themselves in this way. (It is as far as these critics make some sort of appeal to a category called 'the people' it is always an appeal to 'a voice, or a figure of a voice, cited in a discourse of hegemony'.) By thus treating 'the people', the popular cultural critic turns 'the people' into 'the (usually dejected, all-gone) emblem of the critic's own activity' (p. 22). Morris describes a procedure whereby

what takes place is first a citing of popular voices [...] on out of television and commentary then played back/interacted between the knowing subject/cultural studies and a collective subject 'the people' (p. 22-23).

The outcome of this strategy is that 'the people' who both is source of authority for a text and a figure of its over-determined activity' (p. 22) as a result of which 'the popular enterprise is not only smaller but [...] irreducible to discourse' (p. 22).

Affecting both to imitate Chambers' writing and to the currency of the Stuart Hall-derived term of 'cultural dogma' in contemporary cultural studies, Morris duly observes:

The problems that (event) systems-prop-theory writing is a critical enactment of the popular as essentially hybridized, meaning the surface and what is beneath upon particular a retrieval, of the level of enunciation/practice, of the them of cultural dogma. (p. 24)

Morris' casually denigrating conclusion is: if a cultural desire is being unconsciously performed (and remained) in a discourse that tries to contain it, then the argument in fact cannot move on (p. 24-5).

here narrating that Martin is tacitly involved in this sort of move, only that he is quite done to it. His attempt to circumscribe an expanded notion of the filmic movie via 'an understanding of youth culture in all its variations and implications' (p. 13) no doubt will connect him with the areas of popular music (of the possibly packaged soundtracks of the early John Hughes films); contemporary American fiction (not only S. C. Hays but also the currently controversial Bret Easton Ellis) and the movies of F. Scott Fitzgerald and J. D. Salinger contained in the figure of Jay McInerney, whose pre-eminent status as the voice of Manhattan yuppies seems here writing introductions to coffee table books on New York and to a reprinting of Don DeLillo's *Underworld*. (Indeed, television sitcoms such as *Family Ties* which provided the text move with some of its personal and perhaps also encouraging its tendency towards banality and moralizing. And certainly one of the charges against the film movie that Martin proposed back should address after all that they stand there to be about not kids having trouble with their parents.) And while I agree with Martin's desire to 'describe the cognitive system' without submitting it another painting (all 'a knowing immersion for traditional Hollywood forms' (p. 93), surely the regularity with which later John Hughes films (e.g., *Nelson's Leap*) or *Christmas Vacation* made to Frank Capra films (displaying a special fondness for *A Christmas Carol*) might tell us something about the way Hughes is painting his stories: the dramatic calculation in which he is involved.

Finally, it is simply not clear to me how Martin's own position as a film critic occupies those 'limits deriving fundamentally from [...] texts' (p. 13) that he tries to understand (and offer critics and their criticisms) if the 'basic' of other critics determined what they were 'telling to the interesting enough to spend time analysing' (p. 14) would the consequence of this was that 'it is displayed' more of anonymous film movies' reviews 'safely contained off' (p. 13), this was only the case and Martin in his role as popular cultural critic was willing to find them interesting enough to spend a lot of time analysing. Another analyst necessarily displays his ability to turn the supposedly low-prestige products of popular cinema into a sort of 'aesthetic occasion' in which the display of the critic's response and taste is paramount.

To that extent, Martin's article, whatever its location and tone, remains an instance of 'filmic textuality: the popular'. And it is the case that has little to do with some readers (e.g., 'I wouldn't have been able to put it like that, get that much out of it, see that much in it', etc., then such a membership of all depressive rejection of the uneven social distribution of the critical kits embodied in Martin's writing. Consequently, Martin would do better to produce a version of Kristeva's 'ethics of modesty' and acknowledge the constitutive presence of the forms of critical discourse the activities rather than trying to play a populist game in which the critic's cluster of particular discourses is thought to reside in favour of the luminous, pulsating presence of the popular object itself.

NOTES

1. *Cinema Postcard: Interviews with John Huston*, *Postcard* No 128, 1994 (p. 124-45).
2. *5 out from "The New Yorker"*, *Screen* No 24, 1990 p. 192. Subsequent references included in the text.
3. *Adam Martin: "The Teen Movie: Why Bigger?"*, *Cinema Postcard* No 78, September 1991 pp. 18-19. Subsequent references included in the text.
4. *Walter Dill Scott: "Indigestion: A Revival of the Past"*, in *The Poets & Parents*, *World*, London, 1988, p. 14.
5. *See* *Chomsky: Popular Culture*, *Medium*, London, 1984, p. 18. Subsequent references included in the text.
6. *Melanie Morris: "Beauty in Culture Studies"*, in *Postcard (Unpublished)*, *Legion of Television* (SFI), London, 1990, p. 22. Subsequent references included in the text.
7. The term itself was calculated to avoid those terms of postmodernist criticism of popular culture which tended to figure 'the people' as perpetually vulnerable in the name of a 'dominant ideology' as the main text of the cultural critic's procedure. The enthusiastic taking up of this term was required in some current academic advocacy 'the people' as everywhere 'emancipated', 'resistant' and 'engaged', thoroughly exposing their own marginality on a range of so-called social texts. Again it is Margaret Allen who refers in the more hegemonic aspects of such rhetoric 'the people' have no necessary delimiting characteristics except an indeterminate capacity to negotiate, negotiate, generate new interpretations and reshape the materials of culture. (In this case of course, for theories of cultural studies itself.) [...] We against the hegemonic focus of the dominant classes: 'the people' in fact represent the most creative energies and functions of critical reading.' (*Beauty in Culture Studies*, op cit, p. 22).



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Adrian Martin

his 80s and their mentors/teachers who have been eager to discover the radical or avant-garde antecedents of the post-postmodern period. Doubtless, there has been some collusion between this voraciously popular attitude and the [jazz, performative, critical style described by King – although it's more likely to be associated here in the pages of *The American Film Catalog* or *Cinema Papers*.

Looking back, I concede that the effort to make my teen movie article overwhelmingly pertinent to the average *Cinema Papers* reader (as I constructed it in my mind) led to a degree of naïveté popular – a bit of ignorance that gave something like “The teen movie is popular, it is loved by the masses, so why isn’t you [= repressed orthodox linguist] love it, too?” I except completely to blather. More recent (dis)covered by King) of all the contested cultural discourses, propositions and implications contained in that stuporously popular appeal. As it happens, I had diagnosed most of these [perhaps] issues in an article written two years earlier (“No Flowers for the Dinopile” in *Post Punk* anthology, *Issued in the Evening*).

In that 1987 piece, I say what I more easily believe, that “writing that popular” as a critic has little or nothing to do with reaching the people as that word is tentatively imagined by troubled intellectuals while it has everything to do (and this is what is positive about it) with reaching out and travelling down new lines of sociolinguistics and finding new connections and extensions that cut across previous socio-cultural divisions. Writing about popular culture, then, isn’t doomed to be merely regressive or critical. It’s more like a “musical” form of critical activity for a changing culture, female.

It is never correct to call the teen movie an instance of “popular film” or “popular culture.” The genre raises more issues for me now than in 1980. Interesting questions about the low end of such scales (it is a broad issue, yes, it is probably all right to refer to the teen movie as a popular genre) is, one that many people concerned with the genre thought in their heads that they are about to watch a teen movie (usually either teen comedy or teen romance, probably not teen drama). But the paradox of this evading agenda (popular – particularly in the home video age – is that many of the specific terms within that genre may not be popular (i.e., widely seen and distinctly recognized) at all. (The same goes for horror fiction, comedy and many topical video-story genres.) I am sure that most people that have wide home access (and exposure) to *Uncle Sam’s Violence* and *Jeanie Johnston* than *Dr. Alien* and *Who Killed Peterburg?* (to name only two remarkably strange and interesting recent teen movies released on video).

Thus, in market terms, the teen movie today (in the aftermath of its mid-80s box-office boom) is

functioning rather as it did in its purely 80 movie, exploitation days. (Slipping an obscure big video store (as, in the 80s, they passed through the drive-ins), teen movies are, in this sense, more anonymous and indistinct than ever (which is not to say they are all the same). However, then, that some commentators and fans have lately been establishing the teen movie as a “popular” form but rather a marginal or subversive one. *Julius Hay* in *Cultural Studies* (October 1990) suggests that the teen movie be discussed as “minor” cinema, in the sense that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari designate over literature – subterranean – surprising, but hidden from the glare of official culture, and not entirely shaped by that culture’s preferred policy. More tentatively, *Bob Gorton* in *Post Visions* (Feb-March 1990) advances a subversive political message in the obscure teen-horror movie *Janele High* and simultaneously exclaims: “The revolution will begin in the video stores of the world’s 80.”

As to King’s charge that my deepest popular theme is “not to be an intellectual”, I must confess to a certain bemusement, since one of the intellectual reactions to my work from *Jumpin’ Jim* types is that I (ostensibly) over-intellectualize things (perhaps I have thought out too much as simple entertainment). In fact in writing for *Cinema Papers*, I make the point to write for the very readers, while hopefully not losing the average reader entirely. A certain interplay of intellectualism and fanly accessibility is the basis of my technique as a critic.

I can imagine my critic and reviewer says not to be an intellectual then writing “The Teen Movie: Why Bother?” In the way that I did – consistently devoting over half of the piece to a discussion of existing critical methodology in complete with quotations from Derrida, Derrida, Wood, Paul and Proust. I have no wish to hide my “range of education, reading and research” (as I said to them myself in a letter) (just as I all my own to expressions of “anti-themes or themes”) without further in depth analysis. Once again, I think King is making too much of the potential collusion between a certain anti-intellectual attitude and a particular style of writing and, evading so, he unwittingly limits the possible options for critical freedom. Using a term like “tipped out” once every paragraph does not make one an instant anti-intellectual (Wood might ascribe the same intention to *Pepper*, *Durand* and *Oral Marouff*), nor does it inevitably denote a “popular” genre in which analysis, persuasion and political effect are being entirely erased.

King concludes (repeatedly) that my article was a “provocation”, a “polemic” but he is sure I would “never call it” a “very sophisticated well-cal-theoretical exercise”. Not so. King and I are (I suspect) equally conscious of the role of rhetoric in all acts of writing, the difference between us (in our respective critical practices) is that actively

use rhetoric in journalistic or semi-journalistic situations. And therein, there, is never a distinction so King possibly wishes it to be. Theoretical persuasion – particularly pitched to a large and diverse audience – often courts overstatement, literary simplification and self-indulgent criticalness. It has to.

I think at what I perceive as a certain programmatic, prescriptive start to King’s remarks (as in the recent article on criticism by his colleague Stephen Mulrow in *Issued in the Evening*, July 1991), and the aforementioned *Authenticity and Criticism*, King notes the various internal moral debates and contradictions of my piece well – ultimately – he would be happy (and the world of criticism would be better off) if I had not committed them. In a reasonable sense, he suggests I “would do better” to produce a type of criticism he judges superior to the one I produced in 1989 (and probably still do). I’ve not projected onto King a desire for dry, rationalized, theoretical or particularly correct discourse (his own piece is none of these things) but I do wonder if his preferred critical practice is just a bit too analogical and clean, without the “right” cultural political message or really pre-gutted. I usually agree with King’s critical content (writing it read and use a lot of it), but I also always go out of my way to stick up for criticism which is seriously moving, difficult, contradictory and multi-textured.

In the final editorial board of my 1989 article, I wrote: “Why bother with the teen movie? It won’t be popular. What more reason do you need?” Today, I would be happy to change that second (and last) sentence to simply: “Because it exists.” (King does not seem to reply that the teen movie would hardly matter to anyone unless I had written it into existence, or at least turned it into an “irrefragable existence” only now worthy of serious critical attention. But I repeat, the teen movie exists, meaning that it exists independent of any “case” I make about it or of my polemicalized taste for it.

At the moment of my initial encounter with it, and however thereafter, the teen movie has remained “other” to me, something I desire hardly to describe, its best interest in knowing of the outer, I can never completely experience or capture all its fugitive energies, forms and effects (in individual films and in the genre at large). Initial light, the teen movie is for me more than ever a “minor” cinema in the sense described above – not something I “read” or would find something which perpetually surprises me, something I must continually discover. But I suspect that this is my own “ethic of modernity” at work. And that it is that King’s problem (he finds a necessary contradiction between this approach to cinema and a commitment to “performance”, exploratory writing).

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BLOODUST

KARL QUINN

It is unfair to give film to those readers who primarily seek recommendations or references from a review, let me state unequivocally that I am glad I did not pay money to see *Bloodust*. While I am not particularly a fan of splatter movies, and while I find it hard to avoid bringing a certain set of assumptions about politically correct filmmaking to bear on an aspect which is unambiguously exploitative, I have been known on occasion to suspend whatever critical faculties I may possess and simply revel in the trash and gore, but with *Bloodust* this was largely not.

The production notes for *Bloodust* provide the following synopsis, which while massively inaccurate in all indicators of quality, and even some of narrative, serves well as a starting point for a discussion of the film's concerns: "*Bloodust* is a stylish and macabre action thriller with a strong vein of black humor, about three modern-day vigilantes who slip off the mob and find themselves pursued into a living hell."

The vigilantes (Lee (John Stuart Mckee), Frank (Ricky Chapman) and Ted (Robert James O'Neil) three ostensibly funny, goopy, inner-city misanthropes of good, who unfortunately come across as three of the most boring, vacuous characters imaginable. Sex, drugs and rock and roll have rarely seemed as unenthralling a way of spending an evening as it does in the hands of this trio. A trip to Nashville courtesy of the boogie in The Lounge, ending in an orgy of sex and violence (Nash is it always?) in a violent whitehouse, is followed with as much gusto as if the trio had been playing Monopoly and drinking martini-berry cordial.

Likewise with "the mob," a night-group of thugs headed by Ding (Paul Miller), who seems to divide their time between supervising a pool hall, playing poker and chasing women. (Nashville Military this ain't. Nonetheless, it is Ding who undoubtedly has the best space in the film, when he comes across the twisted outcrop of a gated estate staircase and treats himself to a spot of scenery for his birthday.

Paradox as that scenario may sound, it represents one of the rare spots in which *Bloodust* shows any degree of wit which is merely into the realm of the grotesque, the offensive, the shocking. My overriding impression after watching the film was that it would really have loved to be like *Bad Taste*, but for writer-director-producers Richard Matheson and John Haxell didn't have the good sense to realize that, with neither a great script nor a huge budget, the only direction to take was that of parody.



Of course, I could be misreading the film. Maybe it is a parody, and a very successful one at that. After all, there are so many of the emblematic elements of the shock/splatter film thrown so carelessly into the statistical vast parody must have been the case aimed for. The adoption of, and frequent allusion to, American accents would also seem to suggest parody, perhaps of the tendency of the more broadly exploitative Australian film of the 1980s period to brazenly "internationalize" (i.e., pretend to be American), usually to the complete detriment of any indigenous quality — or just quality per se. Perhaps then, *Bloodust* best serves with precisely the light-

ness, appalling, pitiless, fairly directed, scripted and acted film is not so much an attempt at exploitation cinema as a critique of it.

Michael Gilio will try anything to stretch a film, they like film (the joys of censorship). But I'm not sure I don't like *Bloodust* and I don't mind it — at least consciously — a critique of anything (even the fact that the vigilantes' stories are primarily yuppies or religious fanaticism indicates not so much a desire to put these value systems up for critique, as a declaration that the video rental machine for splatter film exists largely of working-class males who feel less than fully comfortable towards these groups and values). But if the

a root-top jump into a Las Vegas evening spot, even a play on that iconic "Who are these guys?" line Wesler's film, however, takes the audience's perspective of Dutch Cassidy and its tone develops a dark edge that is generated by both at forethought as much as by design. The film is dogged by Don Wilkoff's Paul's far-fetched, banal subplot which appears/develops merely a quarter of the way through to a fairly subtle point that forgives you not to take itself seriously.

That's as it is the year 1988, while deployed heroes are quite evidently in the wrong place at the wrong time, which is a point that could have been easily made had it been set in the present day, or the 1960s for that matter. In fact the near-futuristic setting amounts to having no consequences to the look and feel of the storyline whatsoever. One suspects the latter perspective was a ploy by the producers to show off a lot of new gadgetry and hardware, and designed the film's first Wesler formula in a form acceptable to today's audience.

Like Dutch (Paul Newman) and Randee (Robert Redford), Harley and Marlboro do things the old-fashioned cowboy way: grinding around in circles of clay and a few others, and getting themselves into deep water. In this case, trouble arises when they decide to help out an old friend whose bar is about to be foreclosed by a bunch of crooked creditors. Harley comes up with a scheme to rob a bank, with the assistance of Marlboro and some straws from the bar. They pull the job off all right but, instead of the \$2.5 million required to save the bar, they end up with a cache of a dangerous new recreational drug called crystal dream. Unfortunately this unlikely twist makes a respectable villain into a monster of bullets smearing windows, biological plot-nuts and comic one-liners as the heroes try to evade a posse of hitmen which has materialized from the pages of a Western novel.

Lutley's pulpy-faced, sneering Daniel Swisher, the gal-Harley-and-Marlboro posse, struts around wearing bullet-proof leather jackets that can only have been conjured by Wesler's loosest edge of the final Kelly legend. They use machine guns to mow down their victims, and hang on the commande at a slimy looking, drug lord restaurant as a dancer (Diane Lane) imports.

From here on, only two things can save the film: Redford and Johnson. On the surface, the seasoned actors look good together and handle themselves well during the stunt and action sequences. Both, however, seem unable to harness the freedom or energy to break away from the one-dimensional constraints of their scripted characters. They fight each other intelligently as well mixed with out-of-control rage and they wonder whether they do. In fact, hate one another. A few quieter moments during the film are disrupted by badly-mixed, but these scenes don't click, even though some gentle instrumental compositions by Basil Poledouris (The Hunt for Red October, Dangle) would try to convince us that something meaningful is happening.

As the film's writer puts it, his was only released further back the audience because we

don't know who they are. One must give director Wesler credit for realizing the importance to categorize his main men as "out-of-focus" whose principles and motives are never in doubt. By the end, it is true. Harley and Marlboro emerge as hapless cowboys but they are no more familiar or noble to us. Their vulnerability might make them seem more human (and thus deserving of viewer sympathy) but it does not make their personal any more realistic. Neither experiences any real conflict of personality or character, sufficient to say that Harley overcomes his inability to use a handgun and Marlboro finally works up the gumption to lift his girlfriend that he poses for her.

Harley and Marlboro, in fact, are nothing much more than confederates with blurred minds. At one stage Harley philosophizes, "It there is a heaven and a God I'd like to meet the God." Yet the man we thought may have taken on a distant Buddhist-style path to redemption soon resorts to his true colors: beating people, but using motorcycles and roaring away like Maniacs. His partner plots along, cycling he decimated father and doing stupid things like shooting his old motorcycle (mechanical horse) and strapping his wounded body with gutter tape.

If the film is to be acknowledged for any redeeming features, they belong to specific moments rather than enduring qualities. One gets to mind a few clever sight gags and the occasional surprise, mostly involving Johnson, who seems more at ease with earthy delivery than the crusty Redford. Visually, the film has tried hard to capture the processes of the West, battling its status in wetland-but urban wastelands, highways and deserts.

The soundtrack is a mixture of incidental compositions by Basil Poledouris, and songs by performers like Don Jovi and Vanessa Williams, the latter performing a few numbers by way of a cardboard cameo as a bar singer. A lot of the pleasure watching, but unfortunately the music does nothing to give this film an edge at all.

Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man goes down as a life of mixed opportunity on all fronts. It is marred by regrettable abilities, from the

spending decisions that, because of the film, the producer has no association with any products or companies, to an ending that, for all intents, is a caution commercial. What could have been a tagline and ending moment in today's movie culture is ultimately nothing more than a fairly comic whose two misdirected heroes certainly beg the question "Who are these guys?"

HARLEY DAVIDSON AND THE MARLBORO MAN
Directed by John Wexler. Producer: Jari Harkness. Co-producer: Don Mahoff. Film Associate producer: Mary Agnes Tompkins. Executive Producer: Don Wilkoff. Paul Director of photography: David Gaffney. Production designer: Paul Felix. Costume designer: Richard Shuler. Editor: Corey Eilers. Composer: Basil Poledouris. Cast: Mickey Rourke (Harley Davidson), Don Johnson (Marlboro), Dianne Wiest (Angie Siler), Geraldine Ferraro (Tom Sawyer), (Diane Lane) (Vanessa Williams) (Lili Barlow), Robert Ginty (Them) (The Gangster) (Bjorn Johnson), (Don Johnson) (Kris), (Linda Hamilton), (Amanda Plummer) (Jill) (Don Wilkoff). US: 1988.

OVER THE HILL

BY TOMMY TOLSON

Over the Hill. Really too old, with better days on the decline or downward bound (with not much hope of second spring), means that the individual in the mind is elderly, his body's configurations weaken and old, was that true when, according to literature, a person wanders on a supposed to wander around the dusty rooms with memory, slipped feet, searching something about the way things were and having to put up with relatives who only seem to listen or dare, until the moment of death when everyone becomes identical.

Over-the-Hill then, is another when seems to be a career of affirmations which are intended to overcome the notion that aging necessarily presupposes the decline of one's passions. Aims for adventure and new for genuine common sense. And if the likelihood of the audience is

WILLIAM WALKER (JERRY BRONFMAN), WILSON (JOHN HENNING) AND HARLEY (DON JOVI) (DONALD SUTHER'S BOOK FOR THE YEAR)



mostly older citizens — of the previous one any more, George Maters this is a question.

Aina (Olympia Dukakis) is moved by her son into a place with "everything she needs". Apparently, this is also what "father" wanted and Aina will not have "father" to gap. But when she opens a window, all she can see is a cold brick wall in front of her. A letter is then pushed into a hole and, suddenly, Aina is up at a place to Australia where her daughter, Elizabeth (Sigrid Thornton), lives with her husband, a politician with a luxury car and a mansion.

Aina believes that Elizabeth will have more time for her and will be more outside into. Also, upon arrival, she realises that her daughter's life is largely shaped by her. Her and now comes on her relationship. Elizabeth is one of Australia's ten best-dressed women and is president of a body devoted to "free time". When Aina visits the town gate at her daughter's home, she is asked about "free time" and completely misunderstands. The suggestion is that of Elizabeth had been given to her the college she would have written about it in one of her letters to Aina.

Elizabeth, in essence, is preoccupied with the outward appearance, without meeting any public embarrassment and with maintaining to the camera. Aina is seen by her daughter as an unnecessary burden. So Elizabeth and her husband decide to "get rid of her" — presumably because she is perceived to be "over the hill" is a burden. The film then reveals that this topic is a sham. This is the first time this political aspect is shown. Aina confesses Elizabeth's husband and she discuss the problem and how to get her out of the house. Consequently, Aina buys a 100 supercharged Chevy and heads into the bush.

But the film does not only reveal the hypocrisy of the daughter and her involvement by the media, and to the detriment of the public image. Aina, too, was once a part of another kind, she too had been crushed in a relationship in ways which are analogous to Elizabeth's hollow mind (although Elizabeth claims she is "happy").

Aina's struggle for independence suggests that the title of the film should be read ironically, her attempts and failures can only be complete once the demons of the past have been accepted — revealed and purged. Elizabeth will be the catalyst. Indeed the film is really concerned with such processes of individuation through modification and release, on a number of levels. Aina will accept the exception and compromise in Elizabeth's life. Elizabeth will recall her mother's subjection and bondage, so to speak. Elizabeth will also be confronted by her daughter (and so on).

The film does not always have a secure focus. There are a few good jokes, such as the one about the relatively high prices charged for gravel at bush estates and for petrol in remote areas. There is also a car man who goes in ingenious method when taking his things (grit) into the water and then leisurely collects the dead and shell-fishing light on the surface.

Aina meets a number of other characters such as Maureen (Bill Kerr), the gas-pump owner, Dutch



OLYMPIA DUKAKIS (LEFT) MEETING WITH SIGRID THORNTON (RIGHT) IN ITALIAN ADAPTATION OF FIRES WITHIN

(Doris Fawcett), the semi-retired dentist and middle-class gypsy who insists to Maureen Domes in the bush, the car man and his partner, and a number of bush towns where also it's good time is to relax and watch (and attend) at the wheel on the roads.

Aina also meets a number of Aboriginal women and have little to say. But the film leaves us in no doubt that their love of silence and chant, song and ritual, has revelatory effects on Aina, who, it is significant, casts them with respect and deference. The women's gratitude and respect for Aina is made clear in one of the most memorable scenes.

There is much to admire in the film, despite its obvious limitations. It has a number of convincing elements, such as Dutch, which has clearly mirrors the troubles of the past and whose acts reveal a drive towards reconciliation. Elizabeth and Aina (perfectly and sympathetically played by Dukakis), as a woman who is seeking her identity in harsh and alien conditions. In this respect, Dutch is crucial as a catalyst and source of friendship and ultimately, love.

The relative calm of the Indigenous people gives them a monumental presence, figures of endurance and identity in a world of compromise and compromise. Admittedly, there are debatable elements, some of the secondary characters are too shadowy and the resolution is a little predictable, but the central argument is put with some subtlety, aplomb and sophistication.

OVER THE HILL. Directed by George Miller. Producers, Robert Cowell, Robert Terry. Executive producers, Graham Burke, Gregory Costa. Line producer, Ross Matthews. Associate producer, Lindsay. Screenplay, Robert Cowell. Director of photography, David Cornell. Production designer, Simon Miller. Costume designer, Terry Ryan. Editor, Henry Dangar. Composer, David McHugh. Cast: Olympia Dukakis (Aina), Sigrid Thornton (Elizabeth), Derek Fowlds (Dutch), Bill Kerr (Maureen), Steve Diney (Dennis), Andrea Mear (Jung), Pippa Goodwin (Margaret), Martin Joubert (Foster), Alan Young (Jack), Australian Broadcasting. Village Roadshow. Stars: 10 stars. Australia: 1985.

VIDEO

FIRES WITHIN

VIDEO 1985

Sould Fides/Castle be as innovative about something dramatic studies of his beloved Cuba. He needs to get something about *Fires Within* is a film which purports to examine the effects of Cuba's repressive regime on ordinary people.

Directed by Australian Gillian Armstrong, this foreign drama, which is set in Cuba, is a political statement, and presents a gritty story about a Cuban counter-revolutionary who becomes assimilated with his exiled wife and daughter in Miami after spending eight years in prison. The film is also filled with an erotic love story, the revival of domestic passion, even a flash of binding malice. Unfortunately, *Fires Within* fails to deliver any of these by the time it actually shows that the story has passed into oblivion.

The film marks Armstrong's second VHS film, following his first, the recently successful *Mr. Softly* (1984). Presumably, the Sydney star arrived enough points there to be invited back for another film of the big Hollywood charity. This time, however, she has been lured with a lesson of a story that defies all attempts to drop her as a woman in a movie.

Within the first five minutes, Armstrong introduces the dramatic sub-plot of her film. A counter-revolutionary, Hector (Johnny Lewis), arrives in Florida to an uncertain future and a wife, Isabel (Olympia Dukakis), who has hardened toward him because of the danger to his wife in the past. He is now on the scene — Sam (Vincent Philip D'Onofrio), and Hector's own daughter (Sigrid Thornton) no longer recognize him.

The viewer is invited to stay with Hector — once a renowned journalist in Cuba — as he broods over his domestic troubles and prepares his way around the Little Havana district where he is regarded as a hero by his compatriots. But his way through the film the protagonist is still in the

For Leahy is the product of an alliance between native women and the first white Australian explorers to the highlands of central New Guinea. His values are those of the racist white settlers, even though his skewed perspective is lightened with his total naivete.

He is undoubtedly a wealthy man, with property in Australia and coffee plantations in Peru. His "wisdom," as portrayed in this film, is to join with the Gariga tribe in planting a coffee plantation, waiting for it to mature and reaping the financial results. But the world market for coffee collapses, just as the coffee is ready to be picked. The consequences are frustrating for Jas and the local natives who had built their dreams on a coffee gold mine.

Simultaneously, the Gariga wage war with their neighbours, almost at peace, but in transaction with Jas. From this point, the wonderful ambiguity borne of colliding cultural values and behaviour turn the film into a riveting and tragic document.

In some ways, Anderson and Connolly could well have been overwhelmed with their good fortune, as the characters of their subjects spun into a disturbing violent vendetta, rather than the outcome of my pleasure.

Meanwhile, the collapse of rice sales and tourism is the work of Shochi Inamura's time on earlier initiatives and subsequent conflicts growing out of rapid modernisation in post World War II Japan.

While I noted that the economic strife out of the previous two films had been removed from this much more calm and involved reality, there is no doubt that Shochi Inamura has his own economic appeal. In this case it is a significantly more complicated version of post colonialism.

While such a topic is bound to evoke only a small minority of thoughts whose interests are likely to be the more concerned aspects of anthropology and political economy, there are indeed worthy areas of discourse. There is a rich theme worthy position 1990s by the supposedly pure sciences in economics, history and mathematics - anthropology and political economy provide a means of assessing how economic development, social and collapse.

It is inevitable, rarely, that Inamura indicated that these critical and highly value-laden social sciences are capable of providing film viewers with a perspective which may not engender an overwhelming comprehensibility of the state of things, but serves to stir the pot of inquiry and insight. This brilliant, deeply moving and at times tragic documentary stands as an example of how good documentaries can work to inform and challenge film watchers.

BLACK HARVEST Directed by Robin Anderson. Bob Connolly Productions. Robin Anderson. Bob Connolly. Associate producer: Chris Owen. Director of photography: Ray Connolly. Editors: Ray Thompson. Bob Connolly. Script: Connolly. Robin Anderson. Gertie Gough. Translations: Maggie Williams. Gertie Thomas. Title: Australian Film Commission in association with Broadcasting Corporation. 1st. Day (France). Channel 4 (U.K.). Features of Papua New Guinea. Stories: Australian distributor Film Australia. Screen: 35mm. Australia: 1992.

FILM FINANCE CORPORATION FUNDING DECISIONS

22 April 1992

DOCUMENTARY

THE SHARP END Australian television or video (15 mins). The Motion Picture Company. Executive producer: Max Lloyd. Producer: Robert Reynolds. Co-producer: John Mowbray. Director: Greg Swainborough. Writers: Robert Reynolds. Greg Swainborough. Documentary about what it was actually like to be in the Vietnam War, told through the eyes and voices of Australian servicemen, correspondents, doctors, nurses, helicopter pilots, priests, aid workers, politicians, warlords, and their loved ones at home, as they reflect their experience and emotions.

16 June

TELEVISION

BLACK RIVER (90 minutes). Lucas Productions. Producers: Lucas Lucas. Jasper Whiteland. Director: Kevin Lucas. Writers: Andrew Roberts. John-John. Juliette Roberts. Director: Kevin Lucas. (scripted). Music: David Lord. Drama and comedy series about a young Aboriginal boy in a town in the bush. The series is planned during the United Nations International Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1993. Black River will feature leading Aboriginal singer-performer Manooki Enekele and will be shot in the bush and at locations in Victoria.

DOCUMENTARY

KARIMA AND THE JOYS OF THE MOON (feature length). Graphic Pictures and Flashback Pictures. Producers: Andrew Ophir. France. Director: Francis de Chateaufort. Writer: Francis de Chateaufort. Australian singer-performer Karima Muzila will be the star of the popular feature-length music of the older generation of immigrants who came to Australia in the 1960s. Inspired by the composer's grandfather's music, Karima has formed a choir called The Joys of The Moon. She also intends her cultural roots to be the star of a feature in Italy.

FINAL SELECTION FOR PFC'S THIRD FUND

The projects chosen are:

REBEL Producer: Tony Bentley. Director: Tracy Moffat. Writer: Tracy Moffat. A story of "rebel" motorbikes and the experience of non-conformity in a contemporary background. The events are depicted in a highly stylized way, using moral imagery.

GIRD Producer: Peter Matthews. Director: Jackie McKinlay. Writer: Vince Bennett. Larry Parnes. This wants to be a stand up comedian, but he is weighed down by the role models of his father, family heritage and his responsibilities to his people. GIRD is a good hearted comedy with an underlying cultural character and a strong story.

SPEED Producer: David School. Director: Geoffrey Wright. Writer: Geoffrey Wright. Psycho Joe is an urban youth who turns into a psychopath in this gritty urban-crime drama. Joe reveals the respect of his

Dr. David P. (psychology) and his father. Features: George Lewis, Graham Green. Director-writer: Mike Angus. This film is about respect and the people who wear them.

Since the May Board meeting, the PFC also entered into contract negotiations with the producers on the following project:

VIDEO-VIDEO

BLACK BIRD (30 x 24 minutes). Video. Brian Film Studio. Executive producer: Sandra Green. Film: Brian Film. Producer-director: Helen Green. Writers: John Palmer. Video. Director: This video tells the story of Black Bird and the video resulting from the video. Greenpeace also is a production by the video. In the course of the production, this is a project, undertaken between Black Bird and the video. Peter and George and the producers, who believe that Greenpeace should be included on a high-tech city made of concrete and glass. The main characters, like Black Bird, Helen and Mrs. Green, are taken directly from the original Greenpeace video's story.

Since the April meeting, the PFC also entered into contract negotiations with the producers on the following project:

VIDEO-VIDEO

STAR (3 x 11 minutes). Video. BBC-Castrol. Film Productions in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Executive producers: Michael Wessing (ABC). All Film (Australia). Producer: Michael Wessing (ABC). Co-producer: David Parker. Timothy White (Australia). Associate producer: David Ash (Australia). Director: Helen Thun. Writer: Helen Thun. This comedy series based on British comedian Tim White's novel. The series will make over a million copies. Star is a comedy series of reality business entrepreneurs who plan to go to the moon after they poison the earth with toxic waste. Their plan is thwarted when an unlikely bunch of dropouts discover their rocket launch site in Western Australia.

Since the third meeting of a new project, the PFC also entered into contract negotiations with the producers on the following project:

The PFC's third executive, John Martin, said that since then 120 copies were submitted for the third film fund. The PFC and the media distributor Southern Star, however, were difficult to make a final selection of films. We were looking for copies that could be successfully produced within the right budget limit of \$2.5 million. At the same time, we had to find films with potential for domestic and international distribution. In keeping with the aim of the film fund:

"Our concern has been to maintain the film fund a high standard and we feel confident that the films chosen will achieve this. We are very excited about the calibre of people and the people associated with the projects."

FRAMING CULTURE: CRITICISM AND POLICY IN AUSTRALIA

Stuart Cunningham, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, 304 pp., pb., \$19.95

ROSS GIBSON

Kenneth Tynan once reviewed a production of *Three Act Trillion*, saying that, somewhere good the presentation, only a seagull could seriously call this play a good night-out. He then went on to report attendance of this blood-curdle unending of passions that are a little hard to confront.

I also have terrible recall of a poem by Frank Kermode. I think it had a title like 'On Poetry and Other Things Hard to Think' in which the poet/reader is told that the call for everything to be clear and pleasant in the world of intellectual culture is insidious, he argued, so long as intellectuals are prepared to shut down and work every one and then, some thingness it meant to look easy (heart-and-minds politics, for example) they're not put together, that way.

Certainly with regard to Stuart Cunningham's book about the history of policy writing and the evolution of power from the Cabinet room through the lobby room to the living-room and back again, no one is going to describe it as a rollicking read. "This broad statement of policy" (p.171) through most of the book and it is felt to say policy has not yet found its place. (This would be worse poetry like a hybrid of Emily Dickinson, Martin Ferguson and Luis Buñuel.) In *Framing Culture*, Cunningham's purpose is polemic, which it must be, as he charts the way that what is different, quantity quality and efficiency across the scientific tract of economic methods, party-politics, forecasting and ethics that is the Australian Media.

I can't say that there is

any need to be different about what is different in a strange correspondence to their readers Allen & Unwin have chosen to open the book with a few pages worth from a couple of minutes John Fiske and John Tulloch. Maybe in fulfilling their marketing function, the business will want to behave more like measure than authors maybe the title page itself that includes the contents page are meant to help you understand before turning down. But the introduction looks a bit misleading and it doesn't leave the book well

Once you work into *Framing Culture*, the foreword start to look like an unnecessary, gummy-bull opportunity to a text that is already well tolerated already with many moments of intellectual and critical capacity and with a steadfastness of purpose as it negotiates its area of hard-to-thought analysis.

Cunningham takes across the fields that you may have often thought too boggy. For example if you ever wanted someone to talk you quickly through the various details of the delivery system and programme options of Pay TV or the power-offering possibilities of federal government decision making, the book tells what is necessary to know. Moreover, there are chapters that spread out the overworked field of advertising analysis and moral perils about screen violence. All this is useful.

Also in these areas of GATT talks and Pacific Non-proliferation, Cunningham re-examines the rhetoric of "integrated communication" to remind us that the language of television is a polyvalent force that operates with different degrees of amplitude in different power grids. We may derive the assumption of implicit and passive for new national and international imaginaries but it contends of culture are to learn how to be operators of culture. They must understand the limitations in which ideas become texts, or buildings or ministries or campaigns and events in the dynamic system of a society served by a highly regulated media conglomerate.

This is where *Framing Culture* sets the way to some other important. I think Cunningham sets out to examine "cultural studies". He finds a set of attitudes and methods which he then seeks to reconfigure so that practitioners of this set of methodologies might become master in terms of making a difference in that sector of the world of

analysis and otherwise of the culture.

This would mean that sometimes when you do Cultural Studies you would also be doing Cultural Policy Studies. Not really by the least Well. (What Cultural Policy Studies is one way to get a small portion of what you want from your national culture. In the early 1980s (John declare that nations are not going away – they are simply changing.) This same-year main approach makes the idea of Cultural Policy Studies a little more compelling, I suspect.

Moreover, as Cunningham implies, Cultural Policy Studies does have its philosophical fascinations. To myself, it's a curious variant on the Theorem of Limits that are striking chords right now about the very systems analysis, objection, poetic heritage of quantum mechanics, and "first-order" of subjectivity. The area Cunningham has examined is turned to the system of the times precisely because the attempt to chart the impact and the constitution of a government policy, to chart it from its conception to its utterance to its implementation, is another version of the attempt to operate in a culture whose co-ordinates and rules are in constant flux. Think of it as trying to understand the equilibria. Or as Cunningham explains:

Unintended consequences flow from the implementation of policy. Evaluation does making and the power and strategizing of well placed laboratories will come inevitably considered debate in the public arena. [...] The convergence of the policy process is the result of the interplay of significant social, economic and political power and interaction is a publicly demonstrated that all value consensus and cooperation. It only at best as an attempt to legitimize the process itself (p. 16).

Such unpredictability doesn't mean it's holy to study all these contingencies. Cultural Policy and all its intention and outcomes are only like the weather. We should not despair for culture and politics are human systems and therefore they have logic that might be glimpsed despite slowly. This means nothing more than that the subjects while studying and trying to animals are complicated. They was merely hard-for-thought. They are something to work on.

Finally, in the book's bottom set of propositions (well encouraged by Cunningham's dispassionate style of declaration), we encounter a narrative justification for doing the work. Cunningham argues that processes of "cultural maintenance and identity" are politicized through cultural production and in the struggle to control the means of this production. And even in times of economic nationalism such cultural maintenance a precious form in terms of the commodity-value of culture. This is to legitimate the economic and spiritual health of a society such as Austral-



it's likely to displace anything I see as having a culture which permeated and set a determination and the energies and productivity that emanate from such cultural freedom.

What policies are we working with cultural activists and producers, and policy agents, and to what extent are we sharing our resources thoughtfully about the historical, meaning and meaningful policy agents, and identifying where we might try?

This closing title is a disconcerting mix of cynicism and the truth: we need to be able to identify and measure it. A renewed concept of citizenship should become increasingly central to cultural studies as it moves into the 21st century. [p. 10]

This is a clever way of talking about the clever country, I think. It is a pragmatic attempt to discuss how to enable people to be linked through their culture to be successful in their lives for themselves. It is social democracy without being illiberal. Cunningham does not write in bad faith, his premises that people study and develop expertise in order to change to become experts in order to engage in welfare and to change. Within this reformist rather than revolutionary framework, this is how change people can get down to work. We could think of policy and analysis as a power-struggle, but as a reasonable technique of social democracy. Instead, we could think of change such as social engineering ourselves.

policy development may not attract high critical acclaim but [they] have been and will remain powerful instruments: their intended messages need to be developed and contested vigorously by those situated in the power of discourse [pp. 107-108].

THE ABC OF DRAMA 1975-1990

Liz Jacka, *Australian Film Television & Radio Journal* (Sydney 1993, 147 pp., pb. \$29.95).

KEVIN BEEBEYMAN

The role of the national broadcaster is one light on which everyone seems to have an opinion – and a different opinion of that. Indeed ABC Television appears to invite public discussions of support or indifference: witness the suitability of *Backlash* and the prolonged "right versus left" campaign (now presumably rounded out to ten years). Assuming every independent Member has a private story told at their meetings with ABC Programming, The Corporation is also presumably well exhaustively reviewed: the 1981 *Dix Inquiry*, the 1986 (Department of Transport and Communications) *Policy Review*, etc. In all cases, the ABC has been extensively criticised in print: both within (John Light, and others) (Glynis Davis, Geoffrey Whitham, Clement Scahill et al).

And a has been confirmed: The Australian National Broadcaster in the 1980s came to rest, held in June 1990 in Sydney in fact gave rise to the month-long Elizabeth Jacka's latest publication: *The ABC of Drama 1975-1990* in part based on her address at this gathering. The ABC commissioned the work, recognising the priority of historical research on this specific subject. The AFTRS agreed to publish the completed study, as it did Liz Jacka's 1988 collaborative effort, *The Imaginary Industry: And the ABC*

Drama Department, which had already begun work on charting its own production history, provided "some start assistance and information to the author".

At a glance, it is a neat example of history across the water, more necessary than ever in an age of increasing economic isolationism, youngish think. Curious that to note the disclaimer above the ISBN number appears the title page: "ABC

TV Drama: five sub-quantities of history from any formal association with the publication based on its concerns about inadequate sampling and research."

The author for her part quite candid about the limitations of her study. She had only four estates in which to research and write the history, could only gain access to and view a proportion of the 850 Australian drama programmes transmitted by the ABC between 1975-1990, and had little opportunity to analyse the social aspects of ABC drama production: audience figures or critical reception in any detailed manner. Jacka also makes it clear that while she received a lot of information and copy from past and present ABC staff, the judgments she reached were entirely her own and influenced in places by her own tastes and interests as an Anglo-Celtic in a middle-class media audience and more progressive than the *Evening Leader* in *Gender Issues* than a *Radio* that is a *Golden Hour*.

On the subject of the disclaimer the author tactfully regrets that the ABC does not wish too formally associated with the final publication.

In this light the ABC is at least in publishing, and as fellow residents Tilly Miller and so doubt others have observed, bound to prove "wonderfully counterproductive". That is rather than look for discreditable in Jacka's research technique the reader is more likely to see the book in order to identify that, per (or) part of her antipathy which they have attended the Corporation. Later to *Backlash* the television production of *End of the Road* are one thing, critical studies of ABC programming non-aligned academics would seem are something else.

It would be ridiculous, too, if the disclaimer served to draw attention away from the virtues of Jacka's publication. It is a very even-handed study, charting the development of ABC television drama production from its early familiar philosophy (following [colonised] English) culture, education, information – and entertainment – to the (masses) to the more recent co-production phase, and extending the scope of existing work on this subject by Albert Moran and Mick Gussman. The book also explores the fluctuating fortunes of ABC Drama, in the light of organisational and staffing constraints, and the shifts in perspective of the Corporation's charter and its obligations as the national broadcaster, over the fifteen-year period.

Jacka recognises the fundamentally contradictory nature of this chapter – the necessity to compete with the commercial sector – and rightly makes one apology for the ABC heads of Drama and the Corporation is effectively neutral or at least the programming policy paradigm swings "from the outside to the popular". Other qualities which impinged on the type of product which would result – Melbourne's *Daytime* line and (private

Finance's electronic unit (Bureau Avenue), in-house independent production, etc. – are clearly signposted.

For those who thought stripping was confined to *Chances*, Jacka's exposition into television drama terminology is also a revelation. Even readers able to recognise a programme type or category of fan piece might learn something from Jacka's use of a mixture of language and (historical) jargon to clearly and/or distinguish between language and (in) movie, series and (re)series, animated series, featuring in single of the ABC.

Jacka also attempts, with reservations, a close grouping of selected 1975-1990 ABC drama programmes according to theme and genre. Her landscape work in this section with suggestive references to the "fantastic force field" in reference to the literary character (John Scahill) for year 1975 Australian features in the two volumes of *The Shattering of Australia and The Imaginary Industry*. The difficulty for Jacka here, as for any researcher wishing to do justice to the vast output of the ABC Drama Department, is assigning meaningful classifications to programmes with out recourse to complex notes prior to viewing and related documentation. As a result, this is probably the least satisfactory element of the book. In several instances, the distinction between genre and subject matter is heavy of hand. Some genres are listed in the text, others are relegated to an Appendix, but reasons are clear to this matter.

More useful is Jacka's annotated list of 45 key productions from the 1975-1990 programming lists between 1975 and 1990. As with any personal selection one could quibble over particular omissions or inclusions (Jacka finds a spot for the much-maligned *Last Resort* for example), but her criteria are the innovative nature or historical significance of each programme are pertinent, and the subject as a whole forms a handy reference map to what the ABC Drama Department has achieved over the past fifteen years. Interestingly Jacka's list includes some of the ABC's most celebrated successes: *Madness*, *Cartoon Women*, *Seven Life Australia*, *Ben and Me*, *Minion and Me* – most of which were produced towards the end of the supposed "golden age" of ABC Drama production (1975-1979), at a time when the then Commission had altered the production area almost to itself. Of interest also is Jacka's inclusion right across of John Power's



restrained televisuals: *They Don't Cry* (1975). The brief note on this programme again highlights the problems of production capability for middle non-charts.

As well as the key productions (and the book includes 40 pages of appendices: relevant ABC managers (1960-1990), funding and a questionnaire graphs, first-run Australian drama (1964-1984), repackaging and chronological lists of all titles with details of producers, directors and writers (1975-1984), genres not listed in the text) and the ABC Officer of Corporation Notwithstanding the added detail, this is essentially a no-frills publication, no bells or whistles, no illustrations no index and no bibliography, although several useful references are included in the footnotes.

The problem with publishing a work like *The ABC of Drama 1975 - 1990* is that the time given to inclusion of the preliminary nature of the contents. This glaring point of 1975 was obvious in the dividing line between black-and-white and colour transmission, as indicated above, this was significant arbitrary as far as continuity of some ABC drama production was concerned. In fact, Jackie devotes several pages to the history of ABC television drama pre-1975, but neither this publication (nor Albert Mearns' images and history) (1985) and Australian Television Drama Drama (1988) cover the entire history of ABC drama production.

As I write in reviewing the later publication for *Cinema Papers* No. 77 (January 1990) one longs for a book equivalent to the three-volume US publication *Encyclopaedia of Television*. Two years on, the reader is left embracing a volume of Australian television production, drama included, over the past 35 years still exists. Liz Jacks hopes that her work will stimulate interest in ABC drama history "and that others continue the work". My hope is that the very existence of this publication might deter others from undertaking a more detailed analysis of this or explore last subject areas.

This is not to detract from what Jacks has achieved within the four months available to her for preparing this work. Her final chapter on the present and future financing of ABC drama - and in the degree to which the Corporation is fulfilling its charter in this area, is compelling, somewhat sobering reading. Jacks notes the changed production environment without, and the pressure for more economic reform within such government organisations bearing inevitably on the traditional preoccupations and styles of ABC drama, and she poses the questions:

In such a production, financing and marketing environment, what role is there for the national broadcaster in the drama area? Are the programmes that the ABC has made since 1987 under this new regime distinctively different from those of the commercial networks and do they fulfil what was taken to be the aims of national government-funded broadcasting?

Her conclusions? In the best traditions of the media, read the book and find out.

THE DEVIL'S CANDY: THE BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

John Salamon, Jonathan Cape, London 1991,
402 pp., pb. pp. \$19

LOSING THE LIGHT: TERRY GILLIAM & THE MUNCHHAUSEN SAGA

Andrew Ross, Applause Books, New York,
1991, 247 pp., hb. pp. \$28.95

JONATHAN ROSS

The Devil's Candy and Losing the Light are intriguing to read for they speak of movies that were made and then got away, people who intervened or should have, ideas that could have flourished, budgets which took on their own revolting existence: the realisation of dreams - the movie in process. The books are significantly different in approach, style and appeal, and I won't even pretend to hide my feelings behind a mound of fat or analysis.

To get the record straight from the beginning, I confess that I love *The Devil's Candy* in fact, I love its producers as well - the book and the movie of the book. For me to receive this latest instalment, the book of the movie, with sheer bliss.

John Salamon's *The Devil's Candy* is an exposé, of the most sympathetic kind, of the making of the movie *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, based on the book (with the same title) written by Tom Wolfe. Wolfe's book was a bestseller and greeted with overwhelming praise. It is a satirical story of how the mighty can fall - and that is the theme which is repeated in Salamon's account. For the movie, directed by Brian De Palma in 1990, was greeted on release with overwhelming criticism and scorn, and was seen by many, due to its \$50 million price tag, to be a case study in

access. The puzzle the book sets out to piece together is just how a film, based on a bestseller, faced with stars and the biggest budget of the year, could sink so miserably and so quickly into the video store morass.

Salamon's self-appointed task was to detail the process by which a 'backwater' is made, and to understand how directors were made and carried out. His task was made possible with the explicit approval of De Palma, and this aids that able to be present at all stages of the film's life - from the initial casting to the final drawing. She observed and interviewed everybody and everybody to do with the movie.

That a reporter-writer was so intimately involved with the movie and gained such access is, of itself, highly unusual. For it is not just John Huston himself (Lillian Hellman is in the art of *The Red Badge of Courage*) that someone (an outsider in Hollywood) has been allowed to observe the complete evolution of a movie.

Not surprisingly, then, the book has a great sense of authenticity. Normally one would be quite sceptical of a project whereby feelings, emotions, thoughts and inner motivations are freely attributed to various real-life characters (but the reader is encouraged to suspend disbelief when reading the Author's Note 'Interpretation of emotions, location shots, strategy sessions, on most the sets [...] the vast majority of dialogue and scenes in this book record what I saw and heard' and so it goes. Impressive qualifications to write the 'real' story.

Whether you are convinced or not does not really matter for authenticity and reality are not the same concepts. Perhaps it is the key and it is in the light that *The Devil's Candy* truly too exists.

The characters and the star of the book - the Hollywood movie-making process - are vividly represented. From the outset, the reader is aware that the movie dies in the end the interest is in finding out who, or what, did it. The boredom never sets in, because you are never quite sure what will happen next, or what need will develop, or what trick will finally topple the movie.

As such, *The Devil's Candy* is a fantastic pulp read, reaching the heights of movie 'entertainment'. It is like reading the 'Hot Gossip' movie notes in *Women's Day* but only better - better because it is longer, more intimate, more authentic and does not carry any nasty aftertaste. You feel like you are actually improving yourself by reading the book, which becomes a sort of gossip correspondence course on the Hollywood process.

The technical descriptions of the various people and processes involved in the movie production are laid out occasionally dramatic and pleasantly fact-based. People and jobs and processes are described so they enter play their part and exit. They are given their own lives, desires and wishes regarding not only the film but themselves. The net effect of the technical descriptions is to make watching the production credits roll a kind of humanizing and 'enriching' experience rather than a feel of endurance.

For example, the star/boom operator Larry McCarthy is wonderfully described in detail as he attempts to film the opening shot which takes



JULIE SALAMON

THE DEVIL'S CANDY

THE BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES
GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

JOHN SALAMON

IVAN PUTENBERG

A batch of new CDs featuring music from cinema and television soundtracks of Australian productions has arrived, making it clear that at least some sections of the record industry in this country are aware of the quality of work being done by such musicians as Bruce Dawkins, Brian May and Bruce Rowland, to name just three of those given prominence and permanence.

No less than 26 soundtracks are the work of Bruce May (some, I suspect, have been leaked before on other labels, but QMG's CDs records give good value by adding live scores to each CD. May's output came from the late 1970s and early 80s, a prolific time for this strange-sounding whose music prospered as a result of time which needed every bit of support they could get. Discs of new from this time, the soundtracks provide plenty of variety and clues, with a fair number of blues overtones, almost as if the music simply sounds meaningless without the visuals they obviously so faithfully underlined.

Here for the *Yankee Zephyr* is a large-scale action-comedy-adventure shot in New Zealand in 1981. Track 1 ("Blah Theme") starts off with a rhythmic figure on strings, picked up by the strings and then by the full orchestra. The theme at first merry, edgy, angular and strongly accented, is followed by a more playful version led off by piano and harp, and then fun back to full orchestra. Track 2 ("Newcastle Island") is an old friend, "American Patrol" usually played along Glenn Miller lines. There are three "cheer" tracks — tracks 4 ("Glenn's Hearts and Flowers"/"Hell-ooper Cheer"), 5 ("Tank Cheer") and 7 ("Let's Boat Cheer") — and May manages to vary the style for each, with track 7 being particularly lively. Track 8 ("General Glider") uses the Haggar's Horatio theme for a more muted, needed horror.

The *Burnies*, a bit of well-staged humor based on a book by James Herbert, has a richly scored first track with more fun and coherence than some of May's extended tracks, and excellent uncredited piano (possibly May himself), but other tracks are less interesting with a reliance on stringless duos and other over-used devices. (Music for the *Yankee Zephyr* and the *Burnies* QMG M QMG 004006)

McQuinn is a strange bit of Australian politics and melodrama with Robert Powell playing a sort of latter-day *Anglo-American* (Powell), is full of short-winded tracks that amount to little without the visuals. *The Day After Tomorrow* (originally called *Disputed*) is a suspense thriller without much suspense, has an excellent opening start track with piano featured, its repeated tone-note figure to the fore and a strong melodic line in the lower strings, but overall this is the least interesting of the new May discs. (QMG M QMG 004010)

Roadgames and *Private Wars* feature, both directed by Richard Franklin, who provides a more informative note on his collaboration with May



on these two films. *Roadgames* is particularly good. The 6-minute-plus opening track with its combination of atmospheric tune and bold rhythm is one of May's most effectively scored and played themes and overall this score is one of his most interesting as well as a model of competence. I can't ignore, however, that the score influenced John Williams' music for *Raiders of the Lost Ark* as Franklin suggests. One can discern little changes or stylistic similarity in the scores at all. Powell, written with a better, has some excellent scoring, particularly track 21 ("Kelly's Theme") and 32 ("Bird War"), which is the use of alto flute for the "Kelly" theme is very effective. (QMG M QMG 004014)

There are definite similarities with Williams' *Raiders* theme in the opening track of the music composed for the 1986 *Robbery Under Arms* by

Buffy McDonald and Laurie Stone. In the main the music, a march-like rhythmic figure on the strings leads to the trumpet theme. Lower strings have a more romantic theme as contrast and after a series of key changes, it is back to the main theme. The right in rising and split and understated Williams-like, but very effective. French horn and/or anglo are featured on "Gladstone and Aileen" (track 2). There is an extended version of the main theme given over to strings (track 4 "The Gentle Drive"), a pointed horn down (track 11 "Glen Town"), and a track 4 ("Glen Town: The Boat") and 15 ("We're Home") in particular, there is some lively baroque from Horatio Gough. An excellent disc. (QMG M QMG 004013)

The popular and accomplished television series *Brother of Christ* has music from Mario

Milo who also, with the aid of the talented Cas Pless, performs the score on a variety of instruments: guitar, piano, flute, harp, synthesizers and wireless vocals provide plenty of sound variety, but the overall impression left by the disc which has 20 tracks in all is simple, but effective theme used many times. The music worked effectively in context: standstillers! (except this, that, it is an attractive example of one of our more successful television productions [just music 810418-2])

Two discs, both in cases of film and television, showing the work of Bruce Rowland and Bruce Swenson. Rowland's great success with the music for *The Man From Snowy River* has probably been a mixed blessing for him. There are five tracks from that soundtrack on this record (see also, plus music for *Up, At The River Run and New and Forever*. His romantic, expansive style makes much of this music interchangeable, and the disc drifts off very slowly along with a certain monotonous setting in

One disc up, however, when "Olympic Belief" (track 10) bursts upon the ear. This is brilliant, big-band stuff piggybacked along by drummer Ray Sandilands (incorrectly given as "Sandilands" on the liner notes). There is some excellent solo work by reed player John Barnett and on the following track ("Taurus") there is some more strongly rhythmic playing with both saxes (1) and wild guitar featured in times. These tracks show Bruce Rowland as capable of more than such sentiment. (ABC SOUNDTRACKS see 21042)

There is far more variety, however, in the Swenson disc (ABC SOUNDTRACKS see 21043-2). Music from *Roseanna*, *A Time Like Mine*, *Señor Lobo*, *Australian*, *Planet Duet* and others gives a sophisticated, energetic, jaunty, humorous and angsty. A particular favourite is track 15 with some fine guitar and flute featured on a version of the love theme from *Roseanna*. Special mention should be made here of the many fine arrangements on the disc by John Llew

Donnan. La Gallienne (theme for the Melbourne Film Festival) was replaced a couple of years ago by a piece by David Glenister, a composer of considerable originality who possesses of some of sound musical and otherwise into soundtracks of varying interest and fascination. The CD called "Baby Business" (88 534) shows how a fine showcase for his work "Clockwork", which is the first track on the disc, is the well-tuned not-looking rhythmical piece which all Melbourn (Pine Pictures) films will recognise its sheer familiarity makes it the most easily accessible piece on the disc and perhaps the one you would want to listen to most often.

For writing in the soundtrack is more often, and so two tracks and the same - how often is one likely to want to replay them? La Gallienne is, as John Martin's introduction state, an "experimental composer in the truest sense", but his usual flights of hoop are not for everyone. Try "Golf With Attitude" (track 10) and "Call of the War" (track 10) for starters. If they intrigue you will probably find the disc worth investing in.

Peter Best's music for *Me and the Never Never* has a main theme which well captures the loneliness of its heroine and the vastness of the land in which she finds herself, but it is about the only music of interest in the many tracks allotted to it. Tracks such as "The Master" (14) and "The Madhouse Rider's Hymn" (12) are monotonous and repetitive. On track 16 ("The Wagoner's Song") the theme is repeated with "Wagoner's Melody".

Dead in the Water (Scott Murray's adaptation of Raymond Redgate's novel, has a score by French composer Philippe Gendre. Scored by Hubert Bouge, the most extensive of themes (8 tracks and about 26 minutes playing time) is a delight. Rude, Daniel and his siblings play the melancholy, haunting tunes against a constantly changing string backdrop. The result is very French-sounding and very lovely. Track 2 ("Departure") is particularly memorable (David in the *Flash* and *Me of the Never Never*, DVD M 040 CD 1012).

★

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Technicalities

COMPILED BY FRED HARDEN

Freedom from the Press

The demonstrations of all the film-to-computer-to-film retouching/optical effects systems are another sign of a maturing approach to the importance of film to our mass entertainment. Everyone is struggling to match the quality of film or to improve the traditional week take of film into minutes in effects work.

And then there are the press releases (or at least from the few companies that take this magazine's place in our industry seriously enough to continue to send them). Despite the on-going requests for new product information, I can almost bet that each time I call into the *Cinema Papers* office or to my mailbox that the timely large manila envelope will be from Kodak. The material keeps coming when they know that we are being deliberately selective and cannot fit a lot of stuff into the "Technicalities" format and schedule. And what's more pleasing is that it's getting more relevant.

The lead article in this issue is almost straight from press material from Kodak in the U.S. It talks about American cinematographers and American movies, yet this kind of information has few outlets for publication. Take out the more obvious

product endorsements and this is the information that you might find printed in trade journals such as *American Cinematographer* (that is if you could find them in a among the thinly disguised publicity for the latest mega movie).

I have taken out some of the really crass American stuff, and changed a few things around, but basically what follows is the unedited press material that comes straight from Rochester. Not surprisingly, the filmstocks mentioned are Kodak stocks, but the real subject is the techniques and practice of an art that's alive, that no longer complains about working around the limitations but talks about photography with the freedom that still photographers have enjoyed for years.

There is one slight regret in giving the space here, and that is that it's not Australian DOPs talking about Australian movies. Maybe it's too late to wait for it to arrive on the desk and I welcome further article submissions. The interest is there and the evidence was the standing-room-only crowd that Eilery Ryan drew for the Australian Film Television & Radio School newsmen in Melbourne recently.

And that says something positive about the changes taking place as well. FRED HARDEN

Redefining the art of Location Cinematography

Michael Wilkins ABC featured RMYA twice during the past two U.S. television seasons for his extraordinary cinematography on the anthology series. *Quintessence* was the series's shot in different locations each week and every episode is like a short movie with its own detailed look.

Wilkins talks about how he manipulates the intensity, colour and direction of light to create invisible images in viewers' minds. One example is quoted in

excerpt: "This tells the audience the sun is reaching the horizon without their even seeing it. It's elegant in the grammar of the visual language of cinematography."

Wilkins and his peers behind the camera are redefining the grammar of location cinematography in the era of "fast" films and lenses, mobile cameras and compact lighting packages. Wilkins like many other cinematographers says the advent of high-speed films has added 30 minutes or so to each side of the shooting ratio: since he can shoot exterior in direct light.

Another incident he recalled was a shot on a food pulled up to the kitchen and a passenger stepped out. It is a sort of right in a steady part of action. The

driver turned on a "for hire" sign on the roof of the cab. The film editor recorded the flash of yellow light reflecting off the passenger's eye and cheek. It made him aware a little bit more fully. If that isn't working with light, what is?

It was just twenty years ago when Lucius Kervino, ABC, went on the road with Peter Fonda to shoot *Easy Rider*. Once the audience got a taste of reality it was their appetite for stories that could best be told on location. In some fundamental ways, Hollywood has never been the same. Following in the tracks of *Easy Rider*, there was a well-defined trend toward location photography during the 1970s. But that was just a hint of what was to come. Early in the 1980s, the

Sometimes we use rules to catch a bird to suggest that's the bird in the day unlike what's telling the sun, purple and red gas, and sun down on the horizon while people in the forest are



industry standard was a 180-speed colour negative film (intended for exposure at 3000 ft/min) light (used just lighting). The first breakthrough came in 1980 when Kodak introduced a 250-speed film with broad exposure latitude. The impact was immediate: John Zorn's *ABC*, was among the first to recognize the possibilities when he shot *John Thunder*. This action adventure story took place mainly at night. It involved extensive use of helicopters as both a production location and a platform for photography.

Zorn pointed with light, but he used it sparingly. That allowed him to create a steady aesthetic look. One popular trade magazine headlined an article about cinematography in *Blue*

Thunder as "Life in the 1980 ASA Zone." What it meant was that Zorn integrated the possibilities of the new film in ways no one else had anticipated. In doing so, he cleared a path that is now well-travelled.

Dean Gurdley, *ABC*, explored different territory when he filmed *Roadhouse*. The crew and cast had just finished shooting a late night scene set in an expensive room area. The sky was very dark, but Gurdley envisioned a way to shoot a sequence in artificial light. Instead, that type of scene is shot during the so-called "magic hour," when the sun is setting. The problem is that the magic hour usually lasts around 30 minutes, and it is subject to the vagaries of

weather. Gurdley reasoned that if he could work in artificial light, he could shoot the scene in a day instead of several. That would save time and money, and eliminate concerns about matching footage.

How do you create artificial light? We placed a Moleco light with 10 "tube" lamps out of sight of the camera lens. The lamps were set to provide an even spread of light over an expensive area. Gurdley used several HMI lights in the foreground where the action was occurring. Then he shot with a new 250-speed, daylight balanced film. It worked like a charm.

The pace of advance in film technology accelerated in 1985, when the first Eastman KODAK colour film was unveiled. Other advances in technology are incorporated into the KODAK film, but the patented T-Grain emulsion is the foundation. It is built on conventional silver halide crystals are smaller in shape. T-Grain emulsion crystals are smaller, or faster. It presents a larger surface, making it a much more efficient gatherer of light. That made it possible to design a wide variety of "faster" and "faster grade" films optimized for exposure in different situations.

Currently, there are camera films with exposure latencies ranging from 50 to 500, and specialized emulsions designed for exposure in incandescent and daylight. This coupled with advances in camera, lens, dolly and crane and lighting technologies, has given cinematographers tremendous creative latitude and flexibility for expanding their art form.

Here are some more examples. When he was filming *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Wilma Zolger, *ABC*, was faced with shooting a location scene in the cavernous interior of a courthouse lobby. Director Brian De Palma wanted an extra camera that oriented the audience the entire interior with 360 degree moves. That left Zolger with no place to hide old-style film. So he fastened a fast a dozen weather balloons near the ceiling. Zolger used in clear 2500 watt HMI spot on the ground to bounce light off the white cushions of the balloons. That gave him the illumination needed to pull realistic-looking deep focus with the 300-speed Eastman KODAK 2500 film.

Zolger justified the colour light by showing the audience the daylight in the ceiling. It was risky enough in its. When the balloons were on nearly unattended ladders, he just had to pull them out of the way. Zolger also used the balloons to bounce daylight into the open corridors winding around the walls of the second and third stories of the lobby. Zolger had used this technique when he shot *The River* in 1985. The head film allowed him to use it in a huge and difficult interior.

When he shot *The Doors*, Robert Richardson used four different time with speeds of 30, 60, 140, 160 (chopping), 250 (sliding) and 800 (furling). In addition to choosing time that matched specific lighting requirements, he used them to create subtly different looks. It was elegant, almost like a surgeon selecting different

AATON CODE AT LAST

John Bowring used the recent successful *ASC/CEPTE* joint meeting in Melbourne to announce details of his commitment to providing the first complete film timecode facilities in Australia. Now, John is a confident person and he recognizes that because he has a rental facility and dealership for

Aaton he would soon be able, in his own, "pre-disposed" to the system. But his intense frustration in not being able to convince any of the existing post-production facilities with television to offer the considerable advantages of film recorded timecode transfers must have been considerable.

How could he demonstrate the advantages when the key link to video off-line editing is not available? The growing list of Aaton and Ezy women series that use film timecode is impressive but away from our experience.

John has put his money where his mouth is and installed a timeline demonstration system of Lancelotti in Melbourne with the hope that he can break the

chicken and egg cycle and convince others to offer the service.

The Aaton timeline reader that attaches to any telecine is one of those elegantly simple ideas that computers have made possible. Basically, it is a small video camera that looks at the edge of the film and shows both the Kodak Keycode and the Aaton time code on a monitor. Once the operator sets the focus, the computer looks for and converts the codes back into numbers and the hardware supplies an on-screen superimposed display.

The subject of timecode is worth a full article and, as the first of the local productions are going through, are we will come back to.

Oh, the Lancelotti telecine set-up is also fully compatible with Super 16 and Aaton is displaying full management and logging with Lightworks and Avid, etc.

Lancelotti will happily give you more information on timecode and prices on (03) 426 2300.



subjects for different phases of a delicate operation. For example, for the desert sequence and exterior scenes of the world's period (depicted in the story, Richardson used Eastman ESR 8248 film. It's balanced for use in daylight at an exposure index of 50.

"It's the fastest, most full-looking film available. The color retention is also rich," he explains. For a winter exterior look, he used the 500-speed daylight film which reproduces "true oranges." His workhorse film for interiors and night exteriors was the 500 film. He used it in all portraits, whenever he needed a deep stop at comparatively dim light. "I dug into the shadows and reproduced the scene image that was in front of the camera," he says.

Richardson used the 500-speed film film for shooting most background plates needed for optical composite work. "It reproduces more image details and the grain is finer than the new film 500 film. Any time you are shooting plates you need the best possible image quality."

David Pearl first attracted attention in 1979 when he shot *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. He was just 23, and only recently had obtained his master's degree in filmmaking from the University of Texas. It was then this out film, you know that much of the emotional content came from Pearl's adult use of camera movement and aggressive composition. The director wanted a hand-held camera to create visual tension. That was long before the *Found Footage* camera was a gleam in inventor Ron Demme's eyes. So Pearl shot with a hand-held 16mm camera. The 16mm color negative available at that time was much too grainy. So he used a color positive film with an exposure index of 50.

Pearl estimates that required 10 times the intensity of light he typically used for shooting movie video today with the 500-speed 35mm film. Pearl is a commendable movie video shooter with more than 500 credits and many awards. Pearl says:

The pace of technology is incredible. I shot a video recently where I used the 35mm film with fast lenses. We used 35 lenses to light the performance and developed other parts of the frame by as much as 10 stops larger a picture took. The lenses are incredible. You can't do that before. As you didn't think about it.

With today's fast films and lenses, we can use any kind of situation - sometimes it's like I'm lighting a scene back well - at daylight level to get any kind of look. Film takes need for exposure to either render actual daylight or to get a light that's not a subtle difference, but it's one of the things you now have to make before every shoot.

If you are shooting a real video, there is no point in lighting poorly. You can't film in low light and because I don't enjoy the performance in unnecessary heat. It's the first we see after. Overexposure is a great look. The human eye has incredible capacity for discerning a wide range of contrast. That can come into

black, a selection of bright light and underexposed images all on the same frame. I'm not certain that that's a very good idea. But it's a very good idea.

While you are pondering that, consider this: the MTV generation that was nurtured on video is growing up. They make up a considerable chunk of today's visually sophisticated audiences for television and movie film.

More than a few cinematographers who broke in shooting video have already migrated to the

big screen. John Alcott estimates that he will shoot 100 videos during the '80s, along with commercials and low-budget features. His first big feature, *Home Alone*, was a run-away hit at the 1990 summer box office. He followed it last summer with *Only the Lonely* starring John Cusack and Ally Sheedy in an unlikely romance. Says Alcott:

A lot of contemporary cinematography is dominated with new talent and films on the horizon. On *Only the Lonely* [director] Chris [Souron]

TWICE AS AVID

Frameworks was Sydney's (and Australia's) first company to open an Avid Non-Linear computer off-line editing suite in 1981. It was formed as an offshoot of Frame Ltd and Match, which had long championed computer off-line edits on systems with ROLMs. By using TC-Cameralab, the pre-viewers were so good that they ended up doing actual production, which pushed them into an SP Betascope suite and back into off-line with the Avid. Stephen Smith, who managed the Video Point Trust Company Sydney in its early days, didn't need to see the digital workflow on the wall to make a partnership with Richard and Steve in Frameworks an appropriate move.

Well, you may have seen from the advertisements around that Frameworks have just ordered another Avid system, fully equipped to take advantage of the new Level 5 software released at NAB. The PAL version of the new software was first tested at Frameworks.

It seems that the non-linear system is not enough. Once people have the taste at it they want more. Mike Reed in Melbourne has ordered another, the BBC has a Lightworks and an Avid (or more by the time you read this). Stephen Smith points to the volume of commercial work that they have been getting as the reason to dedicate another system purely for feature or series work.

Feature projects are both time- and image-storage-space intensive because of the length of the material to which immediate access is required. It has become obvious that, with the storage demands made by the recent upgrades in image quality, it is not really feasible to have a long project using the real space, even at a reduced resolution, and leave

room for an occasional commercial edit where the client wants to see a 10-minute quality cut at the end.

Frameworks' decision to set up the second system for off-line feature work appears to be based on their considerable experience and is not a speculative one. Talking with Stephen about the changes that have taken place in attitude by producers to the cost savings that non-linear offers over conventional off-line led to a long list of the changes that are still required. Some seem trivial and only require time for adjustment, but others such as the GOP's resistance to adopting the security of workprint are not so easy to change. (For a detailed workprint versus video release argument see Dominic Cassi's piece in the last issue.) Other issues, such as the shorter time that an editor will be employed on a non-linear edit, brings up savings and productivity areas that appear a few cat of winks. Who wants to lose two or three weeks' wages?

The superiority of non-linear is attracting directors and editors to quickly try alternatives without searching up and down tapes or through timelines eventually win out. In a recent conversation with experienced Melbourne editor Tim Lewis, he felt that now that the hardware was settling down it was time we started to talk about creative gains. That's going to be the thrust of our upcoming article on non-linear.

If you have a series or feature project, you can gain the benefit of Stephen Smith's experience by calling Frameworks on (02) 684 6004 or calling and see the suite at 5 Midge St, North Sydney.

wander the audience to see details in the darkest corners. With today's last films, you can do that with only tiny slivers of light.

Mixed about the 35mm film for night and interior scenes, only to find it far an exposure index of between 400 and 800. My overexposing the film slightly, he got a somewhat better negative when the film was processed. How then, does he decide how to expose the film?

I trust my eye and do what feels right when I look through the viewfinder. It depends on the scene, the contrast and how busy you want the picture to be. The more contrast [in the scene], the more latitude you have for under- and over-exposure. The less contrast you have, the more-exposed grain will be if you overexpose the film.

In 1984, Michael Salomon AGC made multi-exposed the first with his astounding cinematography in *Die Hard*. The biggest film scenes were shot on "four" stages. But, incident was served audiences large portions of interesting weather photography shot against natural backdrops of contemporary Chicago.

There was a huge funeral parade with 2-300 flowers marching down Michigan Avenue. Salomon had two cameras looking down from tall buildings, hand-held cameras in the crowd and a camera on a helicopter hovering overhead. It was a dark, rainy morning, perfect for a funeral. The look was almost like polar opposite of the warm party scene shot on an evening boat ride down the Chicago River. There were colorful party lights in the dock where he shot dialogue and dancing sequences. The audience can see the lights of Chicago twinkling in the background.

Salomon was shooting with three to four exposures of key light with a side spin "fist" lens. That's the ideal equivalent of the light output of three or four candles. That was the only way Salomon could hold the background that director Ron Howard wanted the audience to see while

showing accurate depictions of the scenes on the dock. If he increased the intensity of light on the dock it would have overexposed the background. Salomon says:

It was a little scary and, at first, I missed very carefully. After a while, I learned to trust my eye. Learning to use a new film such as 35mm is the learning how to open a new language.

Pinning an audience can impact final key, but it can also give you a lot of time. Like what other works in a 3-500 seat theatre, that was being renovated. There were other scenes in building when we would pull back and shoot through doorways and windows of a variety of different scenes. That gave us a real sense of depth and a feeling of reality. You can't afford to hold those kinds of sets.

This was also the year that Technicolor II Judgment Day lived up to expectations. Most of the media hype focused on the futuristic mapping or computer generated synthetic images with live action photography. That's what everyone can remember. But I took incredible location photography by Adam Greenberg, AGC, to give the film the look and the feel of reality.

There was a pivotal night exterior car chase that extended over nearly six miles of the Long Beach Freeway. It was made in one continuous shot involving the use of nine cameras. Greenberg used time processors and every available foot of celluloid Hollywood to push several minutes' lights and 10-100-foot Combar-cams to capture 12K Halls an each of them. Greenberg had the exposure index to 800. He captured reality with the 35mm film. That allowed him to put details out of the deepest shadows into natural looking way. The black lines held true and there was no white build up of grain on the screen.

[cinematography what happens, but I thought is wrong for a shot. I can feel it. What makes photography interesting is your willingness to take chances. It's easier today, like there is a lot of

tools that don't exist before. The lighting exists, everything's computer-generated. Time is broken. You can make better use of natural light.

The closing scene was shot in a dusty alien clouded desert. Greenberg brought it back to life with light and color. The dominant light is the orange-red characteristic of modern steel. There were two lighting jobs on the film. Greenberg placed mini- and steel-brakes with 300 to 400 tubes under them. He used three 8K gels on each 3500 Kelvin lamp to create a hot orange glow. Greenberg had the light on climate that he could use as a neutral lighting effect. A sheet of plastic to wrap the lights contained water, mixed with white powder and alcohol on which coated the bubbling, creating motion visual on film.

Allen Davila, AGC, who earned four Oscar nominations in *E.T.*, *The Exorcist*, *And the Winner is the People's Choice* and *Amadeus* during the past 10 years, offers some interesting insights.

Everyone is feeling financial pressure, even top level producers and directors. So spend less time on money. If you want exotic locations, and you want the best night shot, you have to move quickly. Otherwise they start asking [how really hard] this is?

How did he feel that the advances in film technology affected the art form during the 1980s? Davila says:

When you go on location, there are given things that happen. Maybe you are given great sunset light. You take the given and you add to them. There are a lot more choices today. There are different times with different speeds and other imaging characteristics.

During the glory days of Hollywood, in the 1940s and '50s, every studio had to have a sign of the look. All of their contract cinematographers conformed to those styles of lighting and camerawork. Today it's an individual effort. No two people work exactly alike.

FILM PLUS

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Trying to sell your services as a film processing and printing laboratory is really like selling petrol. There is no real difference in the product if the standards are maintained, and the prices are set by the market. All the companies advertising can sell is a "good feeling" about themselves and service. Bill Harrington and Andrew Johnson who run Filmplus seem to have found a real cinematic difference and it's somehow mixed up with the value of film itself and staying that way.

I've known Andrew Johnson since he worked at the RG Film Laboratory more than 20 years ago. Always helpful and never making me as a beginning filmmaker feel awkward, my film processing business followed him when he and a partner set up Mastercolor nearby in Elsternwick. At one time there were three film laboratories (Elsternwick was the third) within a short walk from The Source, the AGC. Their reversal was being used for all the student-affairs material and Salomon was satisfied. With the years, partnership and changes brought by rides, Mastercolour closed and Andrew went to work at VFL where he met Bill Harrington.

Bill had worked at Hamphreys lab in London then moved to South Africa and worked for Twentieth Century. He went on to Australia and spent over 17 years at VFL. The option to purchase a

second-hand reversal processing machine was the catalyst to wrap some of the late nights shifts for decades in their own lab. Filmplus opened in Punt Road, almost on the MCG Junction.

They started with reversal, both black and white and black and white at a time when the other labs found the volume un-economic. As Bill says, "One lab is never is about right." They got stuck by mail from around the country and recently there has been demand for black and white material from New Zealand. The Filmplus machines all have rollers that allow them to handle Super 8 and 16mm, and they have another machine that is used for black-and-white negs.

By looking after the small filmmakers, the film students, a non film club and with work passed on from the other Melbourne labs they have had enough work to make gradual improvements to the facility. From the beginning they knew that they would have to involve themselves with video as the film base has led them into their relative freshness, NTSC systems conversion and small run duplication. They have a Super VHS still sells and, like their other services, it is priced for their client base.

If all that sounds too much like a true advertisement, I'm sorry, but I'm sure they can live with the word. A lot of filmmakers in Melbourne would agree.

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Cannes 1992

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

OUTSIDE COMPETITION

Outside Competition, and screening in the marché, was Emilio Gencio's *Una Seta Sospira* (*A Seta Sings*), based on the best novel of Leonardo Sciascia.

An old landowner is found dead in his near-deserted villa. The chiefs of the various Sicilian police forces want to call it a suicide, which it is clearly not. An assistant inspector decides to keep investigating, motivated by a typically Sciascian prejudice (Gian Maria Volonté).

Through little dramatic happens in this procedural which uncovers corruption and cover-up (between the mafia and the church to export stolen art treasures), it moves faster than any other film seen at Cannes. In none of the richness of nuance and atmosphere one reads in Sciascia's best, though acquaintance with the works of this Sicilian giant would no doubt aid in the pleasure.

Volonté, throughout the film hardly 1.5 minutes, gives a towering performance and one can understand how he won Best Actor at Venice last year.

With glorious but deceptively simple photography from Tonino Delli Colli, and clever and unobtrusive direction from Gencio, this film makes an intriguing comparison piece to *Quinto Asedio*'s masterful *Open Doors*, also from Sciascia.

Pablo Perelman's *Arctología*, a typically allegorical work from South America (here Chile), in various various time frames, some real, others imagined, to draw the movement upon man's wander at the hands of a few in death's grip.

Perelman links various forms of colonial exploitation and repression: the missionaries and Spaniards who destroyed the world of the natives of the Chilean archipelago, the death squads' similar reign of terror under Pinochet, and the Japanese exploitation of resources under the guise of philanthropy.

The interesting is rapid, often impressionistic and occasionally startling. For the film comes across more as an intellectual game than a story told with passion, surprising since the director lost several friends to Pinochet's squads.

With *Arctología* in Sciamme de la Cinéque was Audis Thorodden's *Widow from Iceland*, Agnès. This simply-told story was quite effective drama about the lives of Icelandic fishermen and those rebellious teenagers who first learn to join them. The lead character is an especially fiery young woman, and the film examines her plight from a quietly effective feminist perspective.

André Techine's *Je t'embrasse par* (marché) caused a minor controversy on its release in France some months ago. It told of a young architect-builder from the sacred village of Lourdes who has been his a lovely partner's home for Paris. Finding life very hard there, he resigns but finally succeeds in being a rent boy.

The boy's job "marché" is a momentary expression of tenderness with a prostitute (Transylvanie Bonté). After her "mar" brutally rejects him from front of her, the boy redoubles to become even tougher and more cold-hearted. A sort of national service helps him out there.

Like most Techine films, it is only partially successful. The plotting is mechanistic and obvious, and the perspective monotonous. The film is undeniably gritty, though Philippe Noiret as a policeman helps add some warmth to a world based on sexual sale.

Jacques Dodion, whose work is strongly felt across Australia, continues a pace in his recent *L'été de la vie* (*Le Petit Oiseau*), about a boy kidnapping a policeman and his four-wheel drive, which closely resembled Eric Rohmer's *Ami Faut-à-Moi* (before a

schoolbus is kidnapped). This year, Dodion returned (in the marché) with *Amoureux*, about a teenage involving one girl and two boys (it is *Je t'aime*) in stars Charlotte Gainsbourg and Yves Aulic (both from *Ami Faut-à-Moi*), and Thomas Langmann.

Maria lives with Antoine (Langmann) but spends a day with Eric (Aulic), parting with a kiss. She wants to stay with Antoine but becomes obsessed with Eric, especially as Antoine doesn't want a child ("Men only want to have a baby out of weakness. Age") needs someone. That the woman is a nymph (""). She finally sleeps with Eric, causing Antoine to kick her passionately in the hope his sperm will defeat Eric's.

An amateur Dodion, at all times, the camera merely (and rather dull) recommending action. His concentration on close-up and midshots is such that there is barely an establishing wide-shot in the film, and there is no "Italianate" action between dialogue (as is his way).

The style is getting simpler, even plainer, but homely so, especially when the images are so unconsciously lit and composed (on what looks like poorly-exposed Super 16). The sound, too, is unclear, the sound editor cutting out background noise between words as if not laying solid atmosphere. Thus, behind each word is an empty and enormous noise which is not matched when words are closed. It makes hearing to the end of dialogue rather trying.

All this is surprising in Dodion, with Michel Deville (in an equally duller in Italy), has been one of cinema's top stylists, his cuttings particularly charming in its reductionism. Perhaps Dodion is feeling more clearly filmed out.

Dodion's new film, *Un Petit Poucet* (*Je t'aime*), with the new French star Patrick Bréal, is a real disappointment. The acting is even more during this usual, the material left out (as in Maurice Pialat's *Un Capitaine Ravent*) in *Le Petit Poucet*, quite daring. But this police drama of corruption in every relation of society in the Rhône valley is tedious.

Also in the marché was Jean-Jacques Armand's adaptation of Marguerite Duras' *L'Amant*. This English language adaptation (with a 13-year-old British schoolgirl, just March, as the girl) is handsomely designed and shot, but dramatically rather flat. Certainly the attempt to capture the voice, the tone, of Duras don't work (the voice-over by Jessica Hahn is patchily used and hardly evocative). But apart from Duras' *Amant*, what film could be argued to have got that Duras tone correct? Like the novel of Simone, her work reads as cinematic but really isn't.

L'Amant has been so cruelly treated, but as not without interest, and not only to those who feel criticism has some place in the modern cinema.

Exhibition of another kind can be found in Abel Ferrara's *The Bad Lieutenant*, which quickly gained the reputation as the final-cut's toughest film (with Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, produced by Monte Hellman). Shown in Un Certain Regard, it is a bleak portrait of a weary New York lieutenant (Harvey Keitel) as he descends into a maelstrom of personal corruption and drug addiction. One scene has him masturbating on a New York street, while two young girls he has pulled over for a faulty tail light talk dirty to him. There is also an unflinching medium wide shot of Keitel being injured by a very Miami-style heroin addict.

The lieutenant supplements his police work with drug deals, extortion and gambling. But when he is called in to investigate the strange rape of a man, he confronts a living anatomy of Christ's suffering and, for a moment, redemption may be his.

It is particularly gruesome film, within obsession with heroin

and its effects, sexual violence of particularly sordid kinds, marriage (and as much swearing as an American director can pack into 90 minutes (and which had several American filmmakers in the audience chortling like demented schoolboys: "Wow, man, that Harvey sure knows every way to say 'fuck'!"))

All this would be acceptable if it weren't so indulgently handled. Ferrara's interesting descent into the right-time world of the drug sewer has too much false bravado about it and much too little objectivity. Does a shot of someone shooting up really need five minutes of static close-up? Might the audience get the point a little faster?

Worse, for all its obvious excess, the film has no punch at all, which, given the subject, is extraordinary. Ferrara showed great technique in his earlier films (particularly *M842*), but it isn't evident here.

Finally, the most memorable images at Cannes came not from the big names but from a little-known Indian director, Mishra (Rajnikanth Mishra). Excerpts from four of his features were selected by the redoubtable Pierre Rissient for a dazzling 70-minute compilation. Mishra's work is some thirty odd features, but according to Rissient they became of greatest interest when he became his own producer.

The sequence everyone came out talking about (from *The Magpie*) involves the separation of two lovers for reasons of state. An Indian prince stands on the marble terrace of his opulent palace watching a camel train begin its inexorable journey out across the desert sands. Mishra builds a hypnotic sequence from the repeated intercutting of only four shots: of the prince, in medium shot and close-up, watching from his terrace, of the camel train as it moves away to the left across the sand dunes, and of the young woman in close-up, wearing a veil and holding her grief behind an implacable expression, as she rocks back and forth in her compartment on top of a camel.

Even without knowledge of the preceding system of the film, this is an extremely moving sequence. Visually, it is one of the most striking in cinema.

The other scenes in the compilation include a dramatic rescue among burning haystacks (*Miner's Fate*), and a handsome scene (from *Amor*) involving elephants and immense rable extras that puts most Hollywood epics to shame (the cutting is daring in its speed and montage effects).

Another special sequence (from *Amor*) is between three people involved in a sort of love triangle. A new-married woman meets a man with whom she almost had a love relationship some years before. When she meets him again, post foreplay well to the surface and she breaks into song. As Rissient has pointed out to this author, in the best Indian epics the characters, especially women, sing because there is no other way of expressing the emotion they feel. There is not the same distinction between dialogue and song that there is in most Hollywood musicals.

But what makes this sequence most remarkable about Mishra was the device of a flower being passed from woman to 'lover', to husband, to effectively delineate and go beyond the transmission of plot there.

Mishra is clearly a filmmaker of extraordinary talent. His work would no doubt have passed largely unnoticed if had it not been for Rissient's unswerving eye and presenting this film tribute. One hopes the compilation can soon find its way to Australian shores.

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Figure 1

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Figure 6

Abstract

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| Director | Pratima Chatterjee |
| Executive producer | Arati Chatterjee |
| Scriptwriter | Pratima Chatterjee |
| BOB | Arati Chatterjee |
| Sound material | David Guttery |
| Visual effects | Arati Chatterjee |
| Post, final grade | Arati Chatterjee |
| Distributing and development | Arati Chatterjee |
| Distributing schedule | Temp. release (Pre-release) |
| Production by | Individe Wapner |
| Production Office | Temp. release Wapner |
| Project manager | Temp. release Wapner |
| Location manager | Temp. release Wapner |
| Production manager | Temp. release Wapner |
| Camera Crew | |
| Camera operator | Mark Buzdovitch |
| Camera loader | Daphn Constant |
| Operator assistant | Pamela Jones |
| Camera/lighting | Arlette Liffert |
| Sound Crew | |
| First assistant | Arlette Liffert |
| Second | Arlette Liffert |
| Third | Arlette Liffert |
| Fourth | Arlette Liffert |
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| Ninety-seventh | Arlette Liffert |
| Ninety-eighth | Arlette Liffert |
| Ninety-ninth | Arlette Liffert |
| Hundredth | Arlette Liffert |

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| Budget | Est. Cost |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Preparation | 1000 |
| Printed Circuit | 1500 |
| Power | 1000 |
| Assembly | 1000 |
| Test | 1000 |
| Other | 1000 |

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| Super editor | Editorial Board |
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| Project manager | Seattle Harbor |
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| General Counsel | |
| General manager | Stephen Aron |
| General secretary | James Davidson |

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| | Institute |
| Key people | Chris Bowerman Lynn Carlson Lynn Collins |
| Culture | Christine Peters Lynn Bowerman |

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|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Best overall | David Malachuk |
| Continuity | Jonathan Springer |
| Best reporter | Andrew Thompson |
| Breakup | Gabe Matroneau |
| Apprentice | Gabe Matroneau |
| Bill photography | Ryan Schindler |
| | Chris Schindler |
| Colony | Yvesanne Hale |
| Los Department | |
| Art Director | Paul Darnell |
| Worked on | |
| Photographer supervisor | Paul Darnell |

1000

[illegible]

Table 1

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1. **Author:** [Name]
 2. **Title:** [Title]
 3. **Journal:** [Journal]
 4. **Volume:** [Volume]
 5. **Issue:** [Issue]
 6. **Page:** [Page]

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| Director | Virginia Murray |
| Executive Director | Tom Van Christen |
| Deputy Director | Tom Mayhew |
| Chief of Staff | Virginia Murray |
| Chief of Administration | James Wilson |

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| Owner | Timothy D. Peterson |
| Business Development | |
| Investment | Jim Berglund |
| Accounting | Tom Van |
| by | Collection |
| on-line | Tom Van Derkamen |
| Manager | |
| to find | Tom Van Derkamen |
| about | Edith O'Connell |
| Journal | Walter H. H. H. |
| Journal | Andrew H. H. H. |

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EIDOLOCASTIC EIGHT

A PANEL OF EIGHT FILM REVIEWERS HAS RATED A SELECTION OF THE LATEST RELEASES ON A SCALE OF 0 TO 10, THE LATTER BEING THE OPTIMIST RATING (A DASH MEANS NOT SEEN). THE CRITICS ARE: BILL COLLINS (CHANNEL 10); THE DAILY MIRROR, SYDNEY; SANDRA HALL (THE BULLETIN, SYDNEY); IAN HUTCHINSON (SEVEN NETWORK; WORLD-SON, MELBOURNE); STAN JAMES (THE AGE; ADVERTISER); KEIL MURTY (THE AGE); BRIAN MARTIN (BUSINESS REVIEW WEEKLY; 'SCREEN', 3BN); TOM RYAN (3LO; THE SUNDAY AGE, MELBOURNE); AND EYEN WILLIAMS (THE AUSTRALIAN, SYDNEY).

| FILM TITLE (Director) | BILL COLLINS | SANDRA HALL | IAN HUTCHINSON | STAN JAMES | KEIL MURTY | BRIAN MARTIN | TOM RYAN | EYEN WILLIAMS | AVERAGE |
|--|--------------|-------------|----------------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|---------|
| ALIEN 3 David Fincher | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | - | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| AUNT JULIA AND THE SCRIPTWRITER Joe Amato | 5 | 5 | 5 | - | 6 | 5 | 5 | - | 4.5 |
| BASIC INSTINCT Paul Verhoeven | 7 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 7 | - | 4.1 |
| BATMAN RETURNS Tim Burton | 7 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 1 | - | 1 | 6 | 3.4 |
| BEAUTY AND THE BEAST | 9 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 6 | - | 7 | 7 | 6.3 |
| BILLY BATHGATE Robert Benton | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 7 | - | 6 | - | 6.3 |
| BLACK HARVEST Robert Anderson, Bob Connolly | - | 5 | - | - | 10 | - | 6 | - | 6 |
| CITY OF HOPE John Ngila | - | 7 | 5 | - | 8 | - | 6 | 7 | 7.8 |
| CITY OF JOY Richard Judd | - | 4 | 6 | 5 | 5 | - | - | 5 | 4.5 |
| EUROPA (EUROPA) Agnieszka Holland | 9 | 7 | - | 9 | 6 | - | 6 | 8 | 7.8 |
| FAIR AND AWAY Ron Howard | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | - | 4 | - | 4.4 |
| THE FANG THAT ROCKS THE CRACKLE Curtis Hanson | 6 | - | 3 | 6 | 7 | - | - | 6 | 6.4 |
| HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER John McNaughton | - | 5 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 6.6 |
| HOMEROS END James Ivory | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 9 | - | - | 5 | 6.1 |
| IN THE SHADOWS OF THE STARS Irving Raskin, Alan Light | - | - | 5 | - | 7 | - | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| JULIA HAS TWO LIVES Rainer Schlögl | - | 4 | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5.3 |
| THE LAWMOWER MAN Brett Leonard | - | - | 4 | 5 | 6 | - | 5 | - | 5.6 |
| THE NAMED KIDNAP Anne Gilchrist | 7 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 5 | - | 4 | - | 6.3 |
| MEMOIRS OF AN INVISIBLE MAN John Carpenter | 7 | - | 4 | 5 | - | - | 4 | 7 | 4.5 |
| NAMED LUNCH David Cronenberg | 7 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 5.9 |
| PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS Wes Craven | - | - | 5 | 5 | 7 | - | 6 | - | 4 |
| THE PLAYER Robert Altman | - | 5 | 5 | - | 9 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6.5 |
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ON FILM

"I don't really create the look of the films I shoot. That's a collaboration of everyone's efforts. I work from the gut rather than by the book. Every film has its own heart and soul, and has to be approached differently, and I am constantly stretching and breaking the rules and learning how to create new ones. There needs to be a plot, but I don't like to impose unnecessary restrictions on the cast and director because great things can happen spontaneously, and my job is to capture those moments on film."

Dean Semler

Semler's credits include:
"Krush Warriors," "Mad Max: Beyond
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"The Young Guns 2," "Grand Canyon," and
"Hudson River Witches."

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